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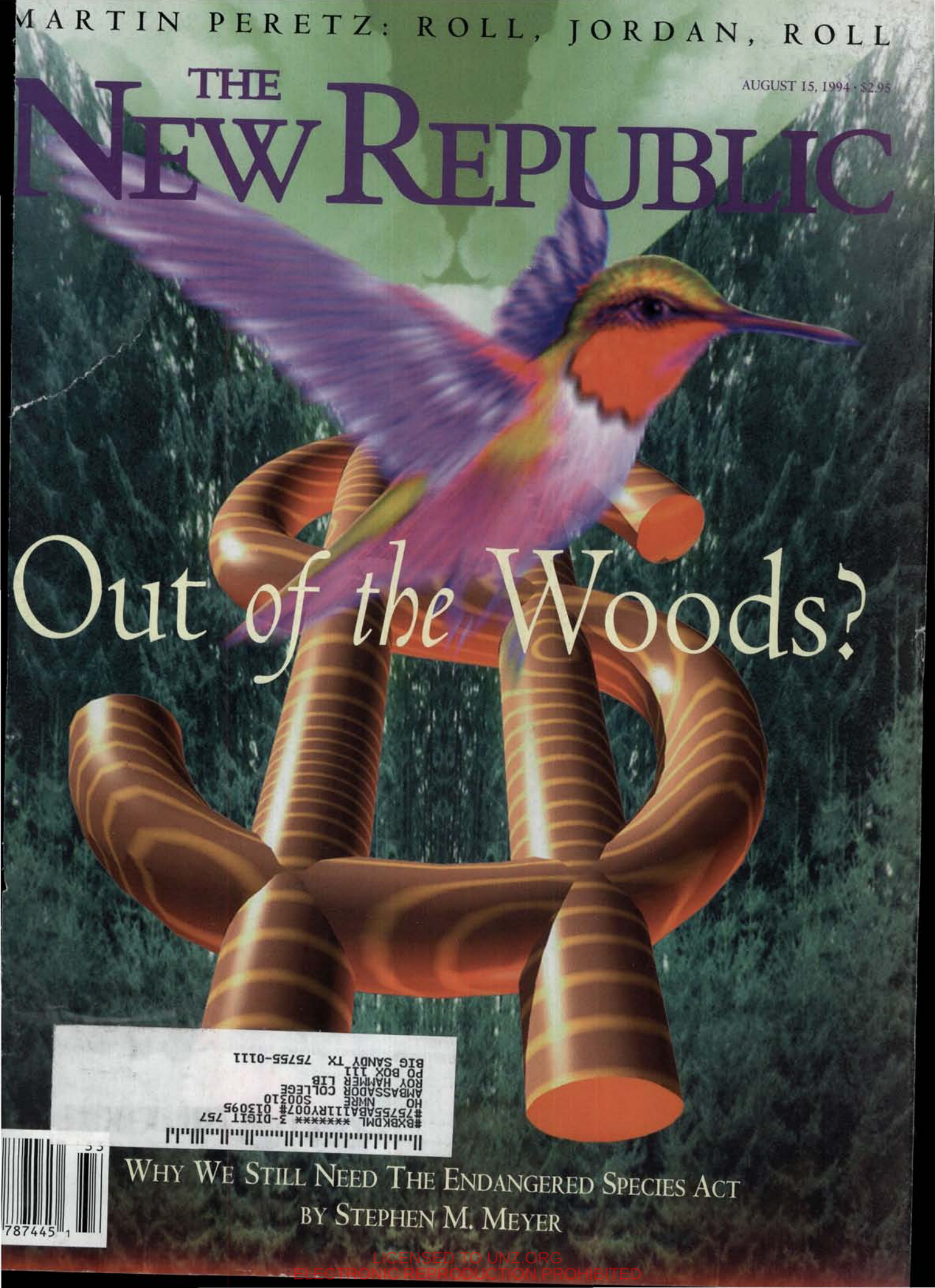

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WHY WE STILL NEED THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

BY STEPHEN M. MEYER

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Making Time

When "Prisoners of Time," a study of the use and misuse of time in U.S. schools, came out a few months ago, people latched on to the apparent relationship between student achievement and the length of the school day and school year.

The report, which was produced by the National Education Commission on Time and Learning, confirmed what some already knew—that the 180-day school year, which is the U.S. average, is shorter than that of most other industrialized democracies with good school systems. But the study also gave us some shocking figures about the hours spent learning core subjects. Our students spend less than half of their actual school time—only 41 percent—learning core subjects like English or math. So by the time they graduate from high school, they have, on average, studied core subjects for 1,460 hours, while Japanese students have spent 3,170 hours and German students 3,528.

The conclusion seemed obvious to many people: If practice makes perfect, no wonder American students often score more poorly on international examinations than students from other industrialized countries. The solution seemed obvious, too: a longer school day or school year or both. Of course, those who call for this don't usually talk about the price tag. How likely is New York City or Los Angeles to come up with the millions of dollars it would cost to add another hour to the day or 30 or 45 days to the school year when education budgets are already being cut to the bone?

But even if we had money to throw at the problem, would adding more time get our students to achieve at the same high levels as kids in other industrialized democracies? I doubt it. For one thing, the correlation between time spent in class and achievement is not as simple and straightforward as it seems. "Prisoners of Time" points this out, and it is plain from the following table, which appeared in "Understanding the Performance of U.S. Students on International Assessments" (National Center for Education Statistics, *Education Policy Issues: Statistical Perspectives,* April 1994).

Annual school days and instructional hours for 13-year-olds, 1991

Country	*Days in school*	*Instructional hours*
Korea	222	977
Japan	220	875
Canada	188	953
United States	180	1,003
France	174	1,073

Source: Educational Testing Service

Our teachers have to waste about 30 percent of class time reviewing material from the previous year.

The information in the table pertains to 13-year-olds rather than high school students, but differences in achievement similar to those we see in high school already exist among 13-year-olds. And more time in class does not seem to match up with higher achievement. French students, who master a far more challenging curriculum than our students, do spend more hours in class than American kids. But Korean and Japanese students, who consistently outperform our kids, spend fewer hours in class.

The issue, then, is not merely how much time kids spend in class; it's what they are doing while they're there. The successful education systems of other industrialized democracies have rigorous national or state standards for what their students should learn in school, and they base their curriculums and assessments on these standards. In this country, curriculums vary from district to district and even school to school—or classroom to classroom. That's because, while states establish core course requirements, they don't define what should be in these courses. And we're big on loading up core courses with add-on topics that arise out of the latest fad or social problem.

The standards-driven systems in other countries are also able to make better use of available time. Because students are working to meet well-understood standards, teachers know what their students need to learn—and what they have already learned. In the U.S., a teacher can never be sure what students in a class learned the year before. As a result, our teachers have to waste about 30 percent of class time reviewing material from the previous year before moving ahead with the current year's work.

The Goals 2000 legislation that President Clinton recently signed into law proposes that states establish standards and curriculums and assessments based on those standards. This gives us the opportunity to create the rigorous and focused curriculums that help make students in other countries successful.

However, the entire effort could come to nothing if states simply allow each district and school to do its own thing. And of course kids in other countries work hard to meet the standards because they know something they want—a job or entry into college or an apprenticeship program—depends on it. Stakes like these will also have to be part of our new system if we want it to work.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1994 by Albert Shanker.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Color commentary

To the editors:

While reading the articles by Robert Wright and Arion Berger on the O.J. Simpson case (TRB: "A Normal Murder" and "Frozen O.J.," July 11), I had to continually flip back to the cover and masthead to convince myself that I was not reading the *Harvard Lampoon* Racist Parody Issue of THE NEW REPUBLIC.

Wright can barely maintain a pro forma assertion of Simpson's presumptive innocence for a single paragraph before hurling himself into a discussion of O.J.'s guilt, finally ending with an exhortation that Simpson accept his inevitable punishment like a man.

And yet Wright's speculations appear almost reasonable when compared to Berger's noxious commentary about Simpson. We are supposed to accept that Simpson's achievements, and presumably those of any African American who was born before some unspecified time, are little more than the allowances of a godlike white culture. The suggestion that Simpson's abuse of his wife resulted from his feelings of powerlessness is demeaning and reprehensible; it implies that black men cannot control themselves and easily snap under the pressures of living in a white racist society, and that their spouses, white and black, should expect to be slapped around periodically. And in a remarkable conflation of the racist stereotypes that have been used against blacks in America for centuries, Berger envisions Simpson as an "arrested soul," a "frightened child," a "saint" or a "brute," but never as a human being. David Duke could not have said it better.

OLLAMON C. ALEXANDER
Torrance, California

To the editors:

By extolling the social benefits of punishing O.J. Simpson, Robert Wright embraces a philosophy of law more appropriate to Stalinist Russia than to present-day America. Wright explains that a conviction will "help some women who are now at risk." This, while true, is irrelevant: the function of a criminal trial is not to send messages to society at large, but to establish the guilt or innocence of the accused. By Wright's standard, we should imprison everyone whose values are detrimental to society. Simpson's trial, like any other, is about his crimes, not ours.

JAMIE TWISS
Seattle, Washington

To the editors:

I am shocked by TRB's presumption of guilt in the O.J. Simpson case. At that time, there hadn't even been an indictment, much less a trial or a verdict. TNR always has something to make me mad, but usually it is because you are such a bunch of smart alecks. In this case, I don't know whether to blame you or pity you—to borrow a phrase.

HELENA CURTIS
Sag Harbor, New York

To the editors:

Arion Berger and TNR's editors should re-examine their association of O.J. Simpson with the color of his skin. His dilemma does not stem from having a "trophy wife" or living a "powerless" existence. I would argue that, in fact, Simpson is not a victim of role consciousness at all; rather, he is a product of his career. The essence of American football is violence, and O.J. Simpson is trained to defeat the enemy. It's no wonder that at home he has an easier time resorting to violence than reason. He's been paid millions of dollars to do so. Whether or not he went a step further in killing Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman is not for me to decide and too easy for me to speculate. It appears, however, that Simpson, and perhaps those who still consider him a hero, have a difficult time distinguishing between life in the real world and life between two end zones.

KATHLEEN T. SCHOTT
Lafayette, Louisiana

To the editors:

Arion Berger's assertion that O.J. Simpson thought society wanted him to run is both utterly groundless and demeaning to all athletes. She writes, "From his monumentally skillful college and pro football career up to his last inglorious fifty-mile dash, we have asked, encouraged, demanded that O.J. Simpson *run*." Is Berger really condescending enough to think that Simpson (and other athletes) are too dense to know the difference?

RON GEORGE
Royal Oak, Michigan

Rebbe rousing

To the editors:

Allan Nadler might as well have brought his camcorder to the funeral of the Lubavitcher rebbe ("King of King's County," July 11). From the tone of his article, it was obvious that he went to Crown Heights not to pay his respects, but to gather material for yet another of his anti-Lubavitch diatribes. The rebbe brought hundreds of thousands of Jews closer to Judaism and the whole world closer to an awareness of God; for Nadler not to acknowledge any of the rebbe's achievements strikes me as a bias bordering on hatred. If Nadler does not care for Lubavitch's practices, he does not have to follow them. But surely he and the world would be better served if he learned at least one of its lessons: to utilize his talents to advance the ideas he believes to be right rather than to denigrate those he believes to be wrong.

LIEBA RUDOLPH
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

To the editors:

I, too, was at the funeral of the Lubavitcher rebbe. Even though I did not see Allan Nadler there I seem to have participated in a different event. Arriving at noon after a flight from California, I encountered a crowd of more than 5,000 that had already gathered at the funeral site. Some ten or fifteen were off to the side dancing. Finally they stopped, after the head of the Rabbinic Court Crown Heights requested them to.

The actions of this very small number, and others in the community, are the normal psychological reaction to death-denial. For Hasidim, the rebbe was larger than life; for more than four decades he was constantly there, never taking a day off, teaching, giving advice with self-sacrifice to all. Confronted with the loss, people had varied reactions: some were able to deal with this great tragedy immediately; others took some time to come to grips with the bitter reality.

As Jews have done for thousands of years, Chabad Lubavitch followers will continue to disseminate the belief of Messiah-*Moshiach*. It is neither a new idea nor something radical. In fact, more than eight centuries ago, Maimonides enshrined it as one of the prime ideals of Judaism in his work, *The Principles of Faith*. What might be difficult for Nadler to understand is that thousands of Jews truly yearn for that redemption—a time when the world will be a better place and holiness, and goodness will be dominant.

RABBI DAVID ELIEZRIE
Yorba Linda, California

Breyer patch

To the editors:

A small but nonetheless highly signifi cant factual error mars Jeffrey Rosen's "Breyer Restraint" (July 11). Based or only the spontaneous, twenty-nine-year old recollections of Stephen Breyer's 1964-65 co-clerk for Supreme Court Jus tice Arthur J. Goldberg, readers are tolc

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that Goldberg "couldn't join" Justice William O. Douglas's majority opinion in the landmark right to privacy case of *Griswold* v. *Connecticut*, and instead authored a separate concurrence. However, not only did Goldberg explicitly "join" the Douglas opinion in the very first sentence of his *Griswold* concurrence, he privately had told Douglas of his intention to do so immediately following the initial circulation of Douglas's first draft: "I am very glad to join your fine opinion." TNR's antediluvian antipathy to *Griswold*'s (and *Roe* v. *Wade*'s) acknowledgment of a fundamental constitutional right to privacy ought not prevent you from at least getting the basic facts right.

DAVID J. GARROW
New York, New York

Jeffrey Rosen replies:
Of course Arthur Goldberg swallowed his doubts and ended up joining William Douglas's *Griswold* opinion. I certainly didn't mean to suggest otherwise by quoting Stephen Goldstein's accurate recollections of the private skepticism that Goldberg and his clerks shared when they first saw the Douglas draft.

King David

To the editors:
If Weston Kosova knows David Wilhelm, he certainly knows a different David Wilhelm than I do ("The Party's Over," June 20). Truth is truth, and when I was advised that Wilhelm was appointed chairman of the Democratic National Committee, I shook my head. My conclusion: A mistake. Too young! Too inexperienced! I called him and he did not return my call, even though I am a big contributor to the party. It made me mad.

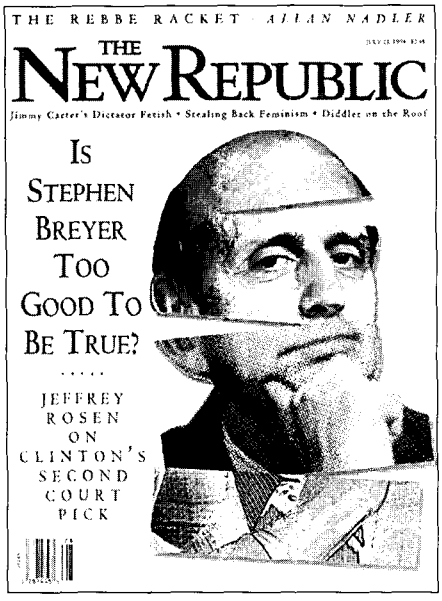
All of the above occurred during Wilhelm's first month as chairman. Then I got to know him. He has become one of the most accessible major players in any administration in the history of American politics. He has involved more of every element of the American politic in the Democratic Party than can reasonably be expected of any chairman. Any fair analysis confirms he is bottom line-oriented. That is why his results have been so outstanding and why the Democratic Party has been so successful at fund-raising. All of the laudations to which he is entitled are dwarfed by Wilhelm's outstanding character. His devotion to those programs that ameliorate the quality of life of Americans should excite all who are committed to an effective Democratic Party.

BERNARD RAPOPORT
Waco, Texas

Shelaqued

To the editors:
In his review of *Special Tasks* by Pavel Sudoplatov (June 6), Walter Laqueur's disservice to his readers and historians is perhaps equal only to the one done to him by his editors at TNR.

Laqueur sets out to judge a massive work of history, spanning seventy years of international politics and espionage, bridging distant continents and languages while insisting on his own system of transliteration of names. Yet Laqueur is guilty of sloppy journalism and inattentiveness by muddling one author's biographical information and misspelling another author's name twice (Leona Schecter never worked for *Time*


THE REBBE RACKET · ALLAN NADLER
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Jimmy Carter's Dictator Fetish • Stealing Back Feminism • Diddler on the Roof
IS STEPHEN BREYER TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?
JEFFREY ROSEN ON CLINTON'S SECOND COURT PICK

magazine and the author's name, printed on the cover, is Jerrold, not Gerrold).

More confounding is how Laqueur could accuse the book's publisher of failing to "enlist a reasonably familiar reader with Soviet and European history in the 1930s and 1940s." The book's foreword, by Robert Conquest, one of our pre-eminent Soviet historians, author of the *Great Terror* and *The Harvest of Sorrow*, lauds the book as "in many ways the most informative autobiography ever to emerge from the Stalinist milieu." Did Laqueur read the foreword?

Equally curious is Laqueur's tally of cold war spies in Western Europe. Counting the Cambridge Five, the Red Orchestra and a few others, he estimates that there were only a handful of Soviet spies in Western Europe, when it is clear to most everyone that there were thousands.

We recorded Sudoplatov's story because he was there and took part in or directed some of the most heinous crimes and the most successful intelligence operation of the twentieth century. His spies stole the secrets of the atomic bomb. Because Sudoplatov's accounts often vary from Laqueur's view of what happened, Laqueur assumes he is right and the old Soviet spymaster is wrong. However, Sudoplatov was a key player, Laqueur was not.

Laqueur argues that an oral history, even one buttressed by documentation, cannot be trusted. Laqueur, a historian, is on treacherous ground. It is evident that his assessment of *Special Tasks* is an emotive evaluation. He says some of the author's statements "seem to be correct" or his judgment is divined by the timbre of the narrative voice in which Sudoplatov's words "have the ring of truth," based not on facts, but presumably on the well-informed intuition of Walter Laqueur. Not a serious approach to history, but apparently sufficient for slapdash journalism and, one must assume, for TNR.

JERROLD L. SCHECTER
LEONA P. SCHECTER
Washington, D.C.

The editors reply:
Mr. Schecter's name was inadvertently misspelled during the editing process. We regret the error.

Dead again

To the editors:
Michael Kinsley's whimsical proposal to broadcast funerals on a cable television channel is in reality a sober idea (Washington Diarist, "FTV," July 4). From a viewership perspective, FTV would probably score well. What adult newspaper reader doesn't look at the obituaries? Similarly, viewers would make time to see who was being memorialized on FTV. From an economic standpoint, the programming costs would be nominal (similar to Court T.V.). And FTV could run the same funeral several times a day. Advertisers would be skeptical at first, but if Nielsen audience data indicated that FTV had a following they would undoubtedly embrace this genre as compelling reality programming. Certainly seeing and hearing noted national personalities eulogized would be a more responsible and interesting use of coming expanded channel capacity than what the Big 4, Time-Warner, TCI or Kinsley's other employer have in store for us.

WILLIAM M. STERNBERG
New York, New York

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FROM WASHINGTON

Good Ghali

United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali is known as something of a pouter. So you never know what to make of a headline like this one, buried beneath all the Middle East breakthrough stories: "BOUTROS-GHALI RECOMMENDS PULLOUT OF ALL U.N. FORCES FROM BALKANS." Maybe, some say, he is in a snit over recent tensions with NATO, or over the chintziness of U.N. member states. Or maybe he fears (as he says) that after the failure of the latest doomed peace plan, all hell will break loose, placing U.N. troops in harm's way.

Whatever the truth, friends of the U.N., from mainstream liberal internationalists to ardent one-worlders (like me) shouldn't let Boutros-Ghali's despair get them down. Yes, things are grim in Bosnia, but this latest headline actually brings a ray of hope. If the U.N. is ever to salvage any credibility from this mess, the first step is for its 35,000 peacekeeping troops to head home. They have all along signified a paralyzing confusion about what the U.N. is supposed to be.

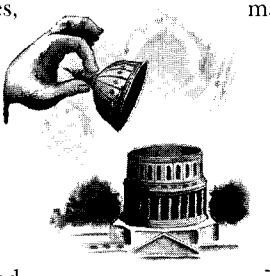
Upon its birth, the U.N.'s animating purpose was collective security—"to take effective collective measures ... for the suppression of acts of aggression," as the charter puts it. The idea was that aggression against any U.N. member (such as Bosnia) was aggression against all of them. A multinational force would, at the behest of the security council, step in and fight back alongside the victim.

Plainly, this part of U.N. doctrine never made it to Bosnia. President Clinton and Boutros-Ghali each call international forces there "impartial." And Boutros-Ghali warns that if the major powers now punish Serb intransigence with air strikes or a lifting of the arms embargo against Muslims, this will "fan the very flames" that U.N. troops were "deployed to extinguish." Yet the whole idea behind collective security is to fight fire with fire, by taking sides.

Certainly there were reasons that U.N. troops were initially sent to the Balkans as neutrals. One was that no U.N. members (least of all us) were volunteering to send combatants. This is the central, formidable problem with collective security: it is, as Walter Lippmann noted, "just as terrifying to the policeman as it is to the lawbreaker."

There is one way for U.N. member states to intervene forcefully without risking heavy casualties: air power. Unfortunately, this idea hasn't caught on, largely because some compelling speakers keep telling us it won't work. The most compelling is square-jawed Republican Senator John McCain of Arizona. After all, if anyone knows about these things, it's him, right? He was shot down over Vietnam, in the midst of a long, painful lesson on the limits of air power.

Well, combat experience can do many things for a man, but turning him into a strategic mastermind isn't one of them. In his T.V. appearances, McCain always says two things. One is that we must lift the arms embargo and let the Bosnian Muslims defend themselves; the other is that NATO jets shouldn't intervene because "air power alone has never been the decisive factor *in any conflict.*" But if we lifted the arms embargo, the air power wouldn't be air power *alone*, would it? It would be air power working in concert with lots of well-armed and highly motivated Muslims. And if we got all those U.N. ground troops out of the way, then air power could be exercised liberally, without nagging fears of Serbian "reprisal."



The most likely reason McCain is oblivious to this king-size rhetorical paradox is that half of his rhetoric is disingenuous. He entered the foreign policy talking heads circuit as an opponent of intervention, period, and then slowly realized that he would sound more humane if he threw in some heartfelt pleas to let the Muslims defend themselves. Other Republicans have caught on to the same trick. (It's a little like conservative calls for the "empowerment" of inner city blacks: give them ownership of a lovely public housing unit, cut taxes for local business, then go play golf while the market works its magic.) But, window dressing aside, the core fact remains that the Bosnian policy espoused by McCain, et al., is directly at odds with collective security and, indeed, harkens back to pre-World War II conservative isolationism. McCain calls Bosnia a "European problem." Sound familiar?

If liberal internationalists are to win this possibly pivotal struggle over foreign policy, and resuscitate collective security, they'll have to come up with a paradigm unlike anything Boutros-Ghali or President Clinton has tried so far—something that can work in Bosnia and elsewhere. By far the best candidate is the idea McCain can't quite bring himself to acknowledge: the rich, high-tech, but risk-averse West provides air support and arms to the victim nation, but categorically refuses to send in its own ground troops, which would only become the sort of hostages U.N. troops in Bosnia have become. Whether the sponsor is the U.N. or NATO or some other acronym isn't crucial. The main thing is that a credible multilateral body be in charge and that it couch the action as the exercise of an enduring doctrine.

Following the isolationists' advice—lifting the arms embargo without providing air support—is a recipe for a long war, with steadily growing armament on both sides. And the longer it lasts, the more likely Russia—perhaps under new management—will be to directly aid the Serbs. (This is of course already a risk, though I think Clinton is hypersensitive to it). In contrast, an infusion of arms, combined with firm NATO air support, could prove decisive in little more than a year. Would it also prove messy? Yes. Would it be hard to get the Muslims to put on the brakes after regaining their lost territory? Yes. (Careful calibration of the weapons supplied might help.) Would Muslims commit ethnic cleansing and other atrocities? Probably. But true collective security countenances short-term horror for the sake of precedent, which thereafter can save many lives. If President Bush had capitalized on the precedent of the Gulf war, the slightest muscle-flexing would have stopped the Serbs three years ago.

Our goal in Bosnia should be not to stop the fighting, or to make the Serbs surrender a few chunks of stolen turf, as the latest peace plan would do; the proper goal is to ensure that Serbian aggression look in retrospect like an extremely bad calculation, and to convince the world that future aggression, in Europe and elsewhere, will meet the same fate. The key is the plausible replicability of multilateral action, which in turn rests on keeping Western casualties low by confining the action to air power.

Obviously, this calls for quantities of brutal force and icy detachment that most liberals aren't comfortable with. But what seems to come more naturally to liberals—impotent pleas for peace and understanding, endless accommodation hollow threats—has failed so thoroughly in Bosnia that watching Boutros-Ghali and Clinton cling to it is getting embarrassing. And as their failure marches on isolationism quietly gains ground.

ROBERT WRIGHT

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 15, 1994

EMPTY SEATS

Grumbling about the sluggish pace of President Clinton's judicial and legal appointments is a Washington parlor game we've tried to avoid. In the most visible cases—the two Supreme Court seats, for example—the nominees have been worth the wait. But as the administration approaches its halfway mark, the combination of Clintonian indecision, diversity politics and old-fashioned patronage battles has led to an abundance of vacancies that are increasingly hard to excuse. The most troubling examples are the U.S. Sentencing Commission and the lower federal courts.

The machinations surrounding the Sentencing Commission are a genuine scandal. Four of the commission's seven seats have been vacant since November. And when the terms of two more members expire in the fall, the commission, lacking a quorum, will be formally paralyzed. As the Stephen Breyer hearings reminded us, the commissioners are far more important within the scheme of national crime policy than the largely symbolic crime bill now limping through Congress. The commission has the power to rewrite the federal sentencing guidelines every year. It also has the authority to re-examine the controversial crime-related questions that Congress refuses to engage: whether the length of drug sentences should be determined by drug weight (crack, for example, is now punished more severely than powder cocaine); whether the guidelines should include a safety valve for low-level drug offenders.

Galvanized by the president's apparent lack of interest, Senators Joseph Biden and Edward Kennedy, both on the Judiciary Committee, are scrambling to fill the void. Biden, whose devotion to his friends would be impressive if it weren't pernicious, has snuck into the crime bill a provision that would extend the term of his law school roommate, Commissioner Edward Gelacak, who has been drawing full-time pay for half-time service, and who now wants to be chairman of the commission. If Gelacak falters in his bid for the chairmanship, Biden has a backup candidate: Richard P. Conaboy, an undistinguished federal district judge from Eastern Pennsylvania, which happens to be where Biden was born. Kennedy, in the same spirit, has a rival candidate for chairman: A. David Mazzone, an equally unexceptional federal district judge from Boston, who officiated at the senator's second marriage.

The fact that the White House is seriously considering Gelacak, Conaboy and Mazzone to head the Sentencing Commission is embarrassing: the chairmanship is far too important a policy-making position to be squandered on senatorial cronies. Instead, the president should appoint a first-rate federal judge, respected by liberals and conservatives. John C. Coughenour, a flinty district judge from Seattle who has surfaced on many lists, would be a fine choice. As for the other vacancies, it would be useful to choose at least one scholar who has thought and written seriously about sentencing issues. The obvious candidates are Daniel Freed of Yale and Albert Alschuler of the University of Chicago, both nationally recognized experts.

Then there are the federal court vacancies. As of July 1, Clinton had nominated 100 judges to the federal bench, eleven to the appeals courts and sixty-one to the district courts. But ninety-two vacancies remain—more than 10 percent of the entire federal judiciary—and up to eighteen more seats may open up before the end of the year.

Even more distressingly, Clinton's choices for the lower courts have been guided primarily by the quest for diversity. And ability varies widely within this group, as the two Clinton nominees to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit demonstrate. The successor to Ruth Bader Ginsburg is David Tatel, a blind civil rights lawyer widely respected in Washington; the successor to Clarence Thomas is Judith Rogers, former chief judge of D.C.'s local court of appeals, who is perceived at the federal courthouse to be in over her head. If Clinton cares about cultivating the next generation of Ginsburgs and Breyers, he should comb the law schools and nominate the most promising young scholars. Of the first 100 appointments, only one, Guido Calabresi, is a first-rank academic; and he has not yet been scheduled for a Senate hearing.

There is, perhaps, a virtue to President Clinton's ambivalence about filling the positions at his disposal. When you don't care passionately about the courts, or crime policy, or civil rights policy, there's a tendency to choose moderate ciphers rather than ideologues. But in two years, this administration and its nominees will be judged by what they thought and did, rather than by what they looked like or whom they knew. That's all the more reason to fill the remaining vacancies before it's too late. •

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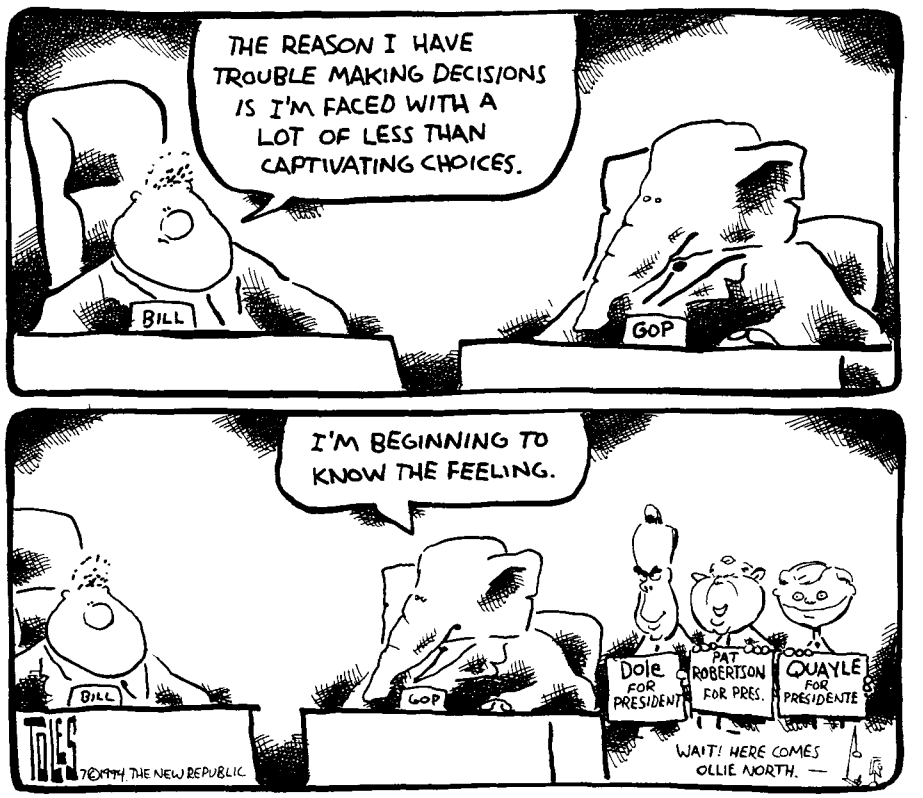
NOTEBOOK

WHAT'S IN A NAME?: The populist fervor that Howell Raines has brought to *The New York Times* editorial page has its moments, but July 26 was not one of them. In the second of two overheated editorials on Stephen Breyer's investments as a Name in Lloyds of London, the *Times* reviewed the familiar evidence, and after working itself into a good dither, concluded with the following remarkable sentence: "Based on the inadequate record in hand, Judge Breyer has not been shown to deserve the prize that will be awarded him by the Senate." The inadequate record? All of the facts have been available since Tim Phelps of *Newsday* discovered them months ago. And after months of trying, no one has identified a single case where any of Breyer's rulings might have had a "direct and predictable financial impact on his investments," which is the standard for recusal. Breyer's investments may not have been particularly astute financially, but his behavior wasn't judicially improper. But on this subject, the *Times*—which called in April for President Clinton to replace Harry Blackmun with a woman or a minority at all costs—seems to be more concerned with appearances than reality.


THE REASON I HAVE TROUBLE MAKING DECISIONS IS I'M FACED WITH A LOT OF LESS THAN CAPTIVATING CHOICES.
BILL
GOP
I'M BEGINNING TO KNOW THE FEELING.
BILL
GOP
DOLE FOR PRESIDENT
PAT ROBERTSON FOR PRES.
QUAYLE FOR PRESIDENTE
WAIT! HERE COMES OLLIE NORTH.
TOLES ©1994 THE NEW REPUBLIC

HOW CAN YOU PUBLISH AN ISSUE OF *The New Yorker* AND NOT BRING UP THE SUBJECT OF O.J. SIMPSON?

Lead of the first item in the *New Yorker*'s Talk of the Town, August 1, 1994:

A few hours before Bob Tur, the helicopter reporter for KCBS-TV in Los Angeles, began chasing O.J. Simpson and his police escort along the L.A. freeway, he sat down with Marika Tur, his wife, co-pilot, and video cameraperson, and together they attempted to *become* O.J....

Lead of the second item:

John Mammoser is a 36-year-old native of Buffalo whose childhood coincided with O.J. Simpson's years of football glory with the hometown Bills.

Lead of the third item:

How can you pay an at-home visit to the writers John Gregory Dunne and Joan Didion—who lived in Los Angeles for twenty-four years, ten of them in Brentwood Park, before famously pulling up stakes and heading for Manhattan's Upper East Side in 1988—and not bring up the subject of O.J. Simpson?

JACKSON HOLE: And we thought that Al Sharpton was the worst company that Jesse Jackson has been keeping. From Lagos there comes word this week that the human rights movement there is livid about the appointment of Jackson as President Clinton's special envoy to Nigeria. Jackson, it turns out, has been chummy with the Nigerian military. According to Wole Soyinka, who is not only one of Africa's most distinguished writers but also one of its most distinguished human rights activists, Gen. Sani Abacha, the ruling strongman in Nigeria, "will manipulate a visit by Reverend Jackson toward his strategy to cling to power." According to Beko Ransome-Kuti, the president of Campaign for Democracy, Nigeria's main opposition group, Jackson was "a friend and collaborator of the military oligarchy in Nigeria." According to the president of the Civil Liberties Organization in Lagos, Jackson "has not come out unequivocally on the issue of democracy in Nigeria." Even by the standards of Jackson's career, this revelation is a little stunning. Not that we expect it to inhibit him in his sermons about foreign policy and human rights, or to inhibit the president in his employment of Jackson. The script stays the same.

A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN: *Negotiating Difference Race, Gender and the Politics of Personality*, by Michael Awkward (Princeton University Press, 1995). •

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My Kim Philby obsession.

THE SHAKER

By Arion Berger

The options were these: (1) hustle Rufa Philby, Kim's Russian widow, into the bar at the Savoy, get her swacked on Negronis and make her an offer she can't refuse, or (2) go berserk with a sword-cane in the Grosvenor Room and smash up all the KGB paperweights until they hand it over. Option three, which was not technically on the list, involved fulminating helplessly over the news that, under pressure from the right-wing British press (also known as the British press), Sotheby's had pulled from its sale of Kim Philby's effects some of the items that could possibly be deemed frivolous, including his homburg, his pipes and the Holy Grail of the cold war era, his martini shaker.

Gin or vodka? How elegantly that question sums up the choice offered Philby throughout his spectacular career as the highest-placed Soviet spy to infiltrate the British Secret Service. Elegant, but not very useful for Philby himself, who was born an English gentleman and died a Soviet citizen, when all he really wanted was to be a secret agent. The London dailies were in an uproar over the auction, but I felt no allegiance to the betrayed country, only the manner of betrayal: what's inside is not important. The shaker is.

Defecting from the West to the East is not a simple decision; it's surprising the kind of totems that make that leap easier. On the last night of our crossing from Los Angeles, my hometown, to Washington, my husband and I stopped in a used bookstore and bought—no one can remember why—a copy of Philby's KGB-sanctioned autobiography, *My Silent War*. The attachment deepened. There was the pilgrimage to Philby's former residence on Nebraska Avenue. And then there was the dream that I was inside the house at a big party with spies. I had to phone my contact, but there were hundreds of numbers and I was forced to scupper the mission. The partygoers just laughed—mission, schmission—and called for more cocktails.

So it is that we're flying to London in tourist season, the Sotheby's catalog open on the tray table, our Philby comes in the bin above. The customs man at Heathrow asks after the purpose of our visit, and allows a bemused smirk to play across his face at the answer. I know what he's thinking. He's thinking: you won't get the shaker.

On Sunday afternoon Philby biographer Philip Knightley shows up for tea. I'm hoping he can answer a question not addressed in any study of Cambridge spies: What did Philby *do* with his days? Sit at his desk, open the mail, make a few phone calls? What? Knightley notes that, for all his research, this teen-mag info is what readers want. "Yes," I say. "I came for the shaker." Knightley laughs as if it was a joke. It is not a joke.

It's the day before the auction and we can't leave the hotel room, having put in calls to Rufa and to John Philby, Kim's oldest son and the closest to him. Neither of London's Mayfair Hotels has heard of a Rufa Philby. I put down my copy of *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* and commence snapping pictures of the pansy-burdened window boxes across the way. My husband says, "I wouldn't do that if I were you." John Philby never returns the call.

Inside the Grosvenor Room the mood is giddy. Camera crews bray in the manner of techies everywhere, bodies pack the aisle and line the walls. We're on the lookout for spies, or at least MI5 monitors, but the audience is mainly dealers. I wonder if I'm in the same room as The Shaker. "Scotch, a bloody great big one," says Philby stand-in Bill Haydon in *Tinker, Tailor* at the moment of his unmasking. I can almost taste it.

After a soporific hour of Churchilliana, the room snaps to attention: Lot 360 is finally up. Necks crane, children hush, cameras begin clicking. And there it is, and it's ... junk. A gaudy green plastic globe topped with a spy satellite and other rococo touches goes for about $8,000 (estimated sale price, $1,800-$2,300). The brass model of a Soviet tank takes in twice its estimate. By the time the auctioneer's assistant holds up a red throw-rug stitched with the head of Lenin, the audience is snickering. Sporting a game smile, a man in red braces seated on the floor behind me snaps it up—a steal at $1,500. And this from an auction house that thinks a solid English cocktail shaker is frivolous.

Knightley stands with his arms crossed, enduring a battery of interviewers. How much better off would Philby have been spying for someone with taste, like the French? Knightley shudders a little and agrees, "Hideous stuff." The dealers stream into the mews beside the building, carrying forest-green plastic shopping bags with the gold Sotheby's logo. The sight of top-form collectors brown-bagging it down the alley with their precious tchotchkes and manuscripts is unutterably depressing.

Then again, the regime for which Philby worked his whole unconscionable life ended months after his death. So a parallel devaluation in the country he betrayed makes for a kind of rough justice. Aside from the brilliant story, what is Philby's tangible legacy? Bad Graham Greene, the pointless vituperation of the British press, choking on "the spectacle of Mrs. Philby decamping gleefully to Russia with her fat cheque." Obscene literary feuds in which writers claim that the West won the espionage war, or that there was no war at all. Perhaps Philby is better off not knowing that the copy of Alex Comfort's *The Process of Aging* that he gave to his lover Melinda, wife of fellow spy Donald Maclean, sold for more than $7,000 because of his smutty inscription. I no longer want a cocktail. We trudge away from Bond Street and huddle in a pub, where I ask for a Guinness. A bloody great big one.

ARION BERGER is a free-lance writer.

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Why your postman hates you.

POSTAL WHIPPED

By Weston Kosova

Last week U.S. Postal Service inspectors revealed that they recently discovered more than 2 million pieces of unsorted mail hoarded away in Washington-area post offices. Letters and magazines, bills and catalogs, all heaped in far-off corners or stuffed into dozens of rented semi-trailers. The inspectors concluded that postal workers, swamped by more paper than they could handle and afraid of being flogged by their supervisors, stashed the overflow so it wouldn't be counted as late.

Something doesn't add up. Tales of ditched mail aren't unheard of, of course. Every now and then the feds bust a letter carrier with an envelope-crammed crawlspace. And it's no secret that Washington's mail service, by the post office's own calculation, is the worst in the country. First-class letters sometimes take three or four days to pant and wheeze their way across town. Still, if you were a postal worker conspiring with your colleagues to boost delivery numbers by ignoring a couple million letters, would you keep those letters lying around? And if you did keep them lying around, would your hiding place be the post office, where, say, a postal inspector just might happen to catch sight of them?

These guys had to know they were going to get caught. Yet they hoarded all that mail anyway. Why? Was the slowdown the prelude to a postal strike? Or were they just lazy? In search of answers, I did what any Washington reporter would do: I went right to the source.

"Norman Ornstein's office," said the voice at the other end of the line. I readied my pen. "There are two possible explanations," The Norm began. "One is just a natural response to a kind of laziness. They can't get this stuff out there so they just hoard it away." Yeah, yeah, I already thought of that. Maybe even he couldn't figure this one out. "The other explanation," he offered, "is that it's a kind of pathology."

Pathology, cool. Now we were getting somewhere. It made sense. Post offices are veritable breeding grounds for pathological behavior. Usually it finds its expression in the Second Amendment. But maybe mail hoarding was some kind of new, mutant strain of the postal pathogen.

"I would think that there is probably a connection," says Edward A. Charlesworth, co-author of *Stress Management: A Comprehensive Guide to Wellness.* Though Charlesworth hadn't yet heard of the mail imbroglio, the behavioral symptoms were so distinct, the signs of distress so unmistakable, that he could sense immediately there was something much more ominous at hand than the newspapers were letting on. "If I'm angry, I may have a real problem blowing people away. But I don't have to have that big a problem to throw mail away. It's suppressed anger that's not being dealt with," he explains. "This behavior gives the illusion of being in control."

Redford Williams seconds the diagnosis. You may know him from his book, *Anger Kills: Seventeen Strategies for Controlling the Hostility That Can Harm Your Health.* You certainly know him from his appearances on "Oprah." "Obviously what we have in these postal workers, if they have hoarded away millions of pieces of mail, is that they have serious aggression against all the people who won't get their mail—and against their managers, too."

Yikes. Turns out the mailmen aren't willful or lazy after all. Mail hoarding is a metaphor for postal angst. And like it or not, chances are your postman hates your guts. This is just his way of letting you know—at least for now. There's no telling what tens of thousands of stinking mad, mail-stashing postal workers might do next. One thing is certain, though. It won't be pretty.

"I think these are warning shots," cautions Christopher J. McCullough, author of *Managing Your Anxiety.* "Even though the shootings and this seem like different issues, my feeling is that they're another symptom of a deeper problem...."

O.K., it looks pretty bad. Yet there are ways for us to reach out to our tormented postal brothers and sisters. I rang up M. Gregory Richards, author of *When Someone You Know is Hurting,* and asked him how we, as a society, can help the healing begin. "The best thing we can do for them is to listen to them," he says. "Find out what they're feeling and affirm those feelings. Treat them with dignity." Richards believes that to be appreciated, postal workers need to *feel* appreciated. "In some communities postal workers are honored along with firefighters and police officers," he says. "Each year they choose an outstanding employee. They get a plaque and a luncheon and a small check. And that's one way that community groups could get involved with postal workers."

That is, unless we're too late. If simple human kindness doesn't work, we may be forced to adopt a tough-love approach to healing the mailman within. Charlesworth warns that "with this sort of thing happening on this wide a basis, there needs to be widespread intervention—systemic intervention."

There wasn't time to waste. I decided the intervention would begin with me and dialed post office headquarters. It didn't matter who picked up the phone; I would feel his pain. Rod Sallay, in the corporate relations office, came on the line. I asked him tenderly why he thinks postal workers hoard mail. His answer nearly broke my heart. "There was no intentional storing of mail," he said. "There was no attempt by managers to mislead. From our indications we don't believe there was any intentional misleading involved in it." It was a textbook case of denial, poor soul. The hurting must be worse than we thought. •

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The case for a baseball strike.

FIELD OF SCHEMES

By Andrew Zimbalist

Since 1972, when collective bargaining became business as usual in baseball, there has been a work stoppage each of the seven times an agreement between team owners and players has been renegotiated. No. 8, which seems to be a few weeks away, could be the longest and bloodiest so far—and this time, the owners are responsible.

I realize that the conventional wisdom says the players are greedy. Indeed, a poll in early July by *USA Today Baseball Weekly* found that 45 percent of fans blame the players for the coming strike, versus 28 percent who blame the owners. One can imagine why: player salaries have increased at a rate of 19 percent per year. Median player salaries are $410,000; average salaries are nearly $1.2 million, more than sixty times the average yearly earnings of U.S. nonmanagement private-sector employees. What's more, they're getting paid for playing a kids' game.

Yet the players are not considering a strike because they want more money; they just want to be paid according to fair rules. (Full disclosure: I have served as a consultant to the players' union.) Like other workers, the players think their salaries should be governed primarily by the laws of supply and demand. Since the concept of free agency was introduced in 1976—the result of previous struggles by the players' union—they have had limited free-market rights. Today, the owners want to roll back those rights through the imposition of a salary cap (a limit on the total amount a team's players can earn). The players are right to resist it.

When Barry Bonds is paid $7.3 million per year by the San Francisco Giants, it is because the team believes he will produce at least that much value. Does he? Hands down. In 1992, before signing Bonds, the Giants finished second-to-last in their division and attracted only 1.6 million fans to Candlestick Park. In 1993, with Bonds on board, the Giants tied for first, and attendance rose to 2.6 million. With average ticket prices at Candlestick around $10, and with the average fan spending another $10 on things like parking and food, the extra 1 million fans increased the Giants' take by $20 million, not counting additional revenues from stadium advertising and local T.V. and radio contracts.

Is Bonds single-handedly responsible for these gains? No. But he played a leading role in improving his team's fortunes, as have the other twelve major leaguers who earn more than $5 million. Admittedly, not all players meet owners' expectations; many are overpaid. Yet many outperform expectations and are underpaid. That's life in the business world.

What about the owners' claim that franchises in small cities are losing money, and that only a salary cap can avert the problem? Although a handful of clubs may lose a little money in a particular year, it generally takes a small-market franchise with poor talent and wasteful management to go into the red. According to *Financial World* magazine, baseball's most trumpeted indigent team, the San Diego Padres, took in $17.5 million in profits in 1993. In Pittsburgh, the Pirates, who recently convinced the city to lend them an additional $8 million and to restructure their stadium lease, are said to have earned $4 million last year. And the Cincinnati Reds, who occupy baseball's smallest media market, were profitable every year between 1984 and 1992, with an average annual operating income of around $10 million. (Reds owner Marge Schott was sued by her minority partners in 1991 for fudging team accounting records to show losses, so we have more hard details about the Reds' books than those of other teams.)

But even if the small-city franchises are potentially profitable, isn't it a problem that some teams eke out a single-digit profit while competing for player talent with big-city teams that earn up to $50 million per year? In fact, competitive balance in baseball is better than ever. Dynasties like the New York Yankees and Los Angeles Dodgers no longer exist; and smallish franchises like Minnesota and Atlanta, for instance, have been at the forefront of the game for the past decade.

Well, what if competitive balance problems emerge? Suppose we agree that it is desirable to help out the financially fragile teams. Is the salary cap the way to do this? Absolutely not. It has one purpose: to keep salaries down, with the ultimate effect of raising owner profits. As proposed, the cap would set total salaries at 50 percent of baseball's revenues (as opposed to 1994's market-driven level of 58 percent). In 1995 average team salaries and benefits would be about $35 million. An adjustment of plus 10 percent or minus 15 percent would then be allowed, so that some teams could have payrolls as high as $38.5 million and other teams could go as low as $29.8 million. While this would force eleven teams to lower their payrolls, seven small-city teams would have to *raise* theirs. Three teams would have to increase their salaries by between $9 million and $16 million: the Padres (whose 1994 payroll was $13.5 million), the Montreal Expos ($18.7 million) and the Pirates ($20.3 million). The owners have come up with a revenue-sharing plan to remedy this inequity, but in the case of these three teams, at least, the plan is reportedly so meager that it will scarcely make up for half the extra payroll costs required by the salary cap.

As it stands, the owners have refused to pledge not to unilaterally impose new restrictions on the players before the 1995 season. To break the impasse, Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio introduced a bill earlier this summer that would have partly removed baseball's unique antitrust exemption, giving the players legal

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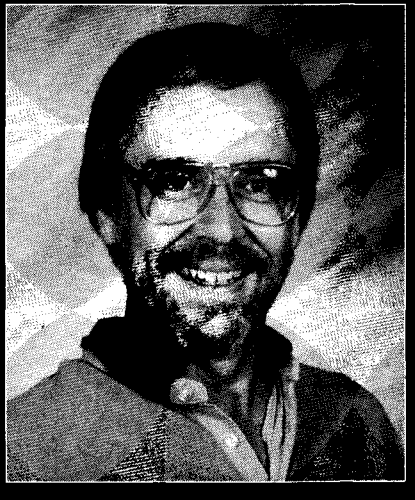

Chet Day, publisher of the newsletter, *Health & Beyond*, and a HealthMax owner.

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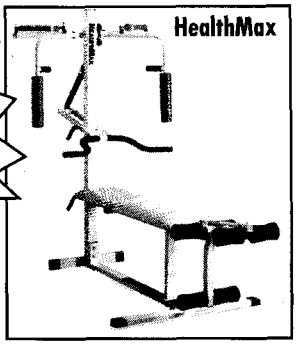

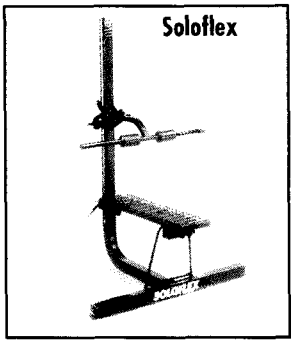

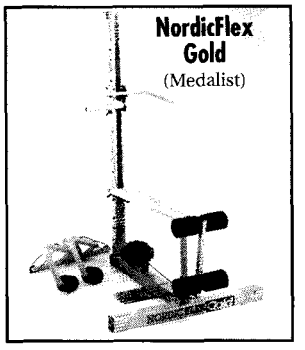

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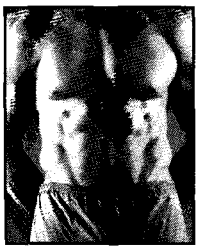

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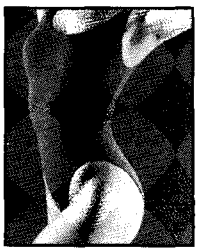

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recourse to challenge the salary cap and other unnecessary trade restraints. But Metzenbaum's bill failed to make it out of the Judiciary Committee, whose members voted 11 to 7 to kill it. Interestingly, a majority of Democrats on the committee supported the owners, perhaps at the behest of retiring Senator George Mitchell, who is in line to become baseball's next commissioner.

This leaves the players with only one remedy—to strike at a strategic time in 1994. They have their greatest leverage at the end of the season, as attendance picks up in the heat of the divisional races and before the owners reap 80 percent or more of their T.V. revenues from postseason play. The players hope that the owners will not be willing to forgo these revenues and will find themselves compelled to bargain more flexibly.

The owners say they want a partnership with the players. If so, they should offer them full access to team accounting records—the real numbers—as well as seats on the executive council that governs the sport. Giving the union a decision-making role can only improve management of the game and ensure its continued prosperity. As long as the players don't have the same rights as other workers, baseball's greatest battles will continue to be fought off the field.

ANDREW ZIMBALIST, a professor of economics at Smith College, is the author of *Baseball and Billions* (Basic Books).

AREZZO POSTCARD

QUICK SILVIO

By Charles S. Maier

In June, Tuscany is covered with fragrant and brilliant yellow broom, and scarlet and orange poppies grow along the dusty roads. Yet during the summer a half-century ago, its lovely hills were ravaged by some of World War II's cruelest fighting, as German troops retreated north after losing Rome, under draconian orders to suppress partisan activity behind their lines.

In circumstances still contested today, partisans shot and killed three German soldiers who had come to drink in a club in the little town of Civitella della Chiana. Ten days later, early on the morning of June 29, soldiers of the Hermann Goering division sealed off the town, burned the houses and shot all the men they could find. More than 100 died in Civitella. In other hamlets, where they exacted a comparable toll, the troops did not bother to discriminate by sex or by age.

A month ago I was in the Tuscan city of Arezzo to attend a conference commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the mass reprisals. Our host, historian Leonardo Paggi of the University of Modena, was 3 years old when his father and grandfather were gunned down virtually before his eyes. During the conference historians from Europe (including Germany) and North America discussed the attack and the way its memory subsequently shaped the life of the town. Old partisans and townspeople recalled the event for us, but not without bitter reproaches, for the widows of Civitella felt that irresponsible partisans had heedlessly brought down German wrath.

Civitella's doubts about the partisans is long-standing, but today they reflect a larger Italian questioning of the Resistance ideology that provided a civic faith for the "First Republic" since the war. Fealty to the Resistance united the left, sanctioned a common polity with the Christian Democrats (who could claim a role in the struggle against Benito Mussolini) and isolated the neo-Fascists. Those alignments were shattered, however, by elections last March, which have led to a government that for the first time since the war includes ministers who openly claim inspiration from the Fascist state.

The election left many of my Italian friends—most, admittedly, from the left—in various states of shell shock and discouragement. Despite two years of spectacular anti-corruption prosecutions, the left did not advance. Neither did various new coalitions, such as Mario Segni's Referendum movement or Leoluca Orlando's anti-mafia Network in Sicily. In the center, it was no surprise that the corruption-tainted Socialists suffered heavy losses. The most profound change, however, was the collapse of the former Christian Democratic force, which had dominated postwar Italian politics, and the triumph of an anti-establishment coalition with pro-business, regionalist and rightist components.

Of the three components of the victorious coalition, my friends are less preoccupied by the presence of the National Alliance (the self-designation of the supposedly reformed neo-Fascists) or with the regionalist distemper of Umberto Bossi's Northern Leagues than with the skills of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi in rapidly mobilizing an electoral cohort of television-viewers, sports fans and impatient business leaders.

Like Spain's ex-Falangists of two decades ago, the National Alliance is divided. Some adherents yearn for an authoritarian restoration; others, including party leader Gianfranco Fini, endeavor to distance it from those most nostalgic for black shirts or anti-Semitism. For all Fini's efforts, the National Alliance will probably remain confined to less than 12 to 15 percent of the vote; its surprise success was largely due to Sicilian voters' rejection of both the long-entrenched Christian Democrats and the reformist Network.

The future of Bossi's Northern League, which spread like wildfire in 1990, has actually been thrown into doubt by Berlusconi's victory. A regional alternative designed originally to protect economically vigorous Lombardy

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against an allegedly parasitic Mezzogiorno beckons less urgently when an energetic, self-made leader such as Berlusconi can capture the country as a whole. The League's most enduring legacy may prove to be a harsh deconstruction of the First Republic's political discourse. League defenders claim this as a victory over stale moralist rhetoric, but the movement's denunciations of parliamentary usages and its almost racist depiction of the southern half of the country also coarsened democratic aspirations and helped clear the way for an even greater mobilization of support by Berlusconi.

The electoral returns may be in, but not the results of governance. When I left Italy, Berlusconi seemed to be moving from one success to another. Intellectuals of the independent left, such as jurist Stefano Rodota, decried creeping techo-authoritarianism as Berlusconi attempted to install his supporters in state television networks, hitherto parceled out to major party currents, or in the Bank of Italy. No doubt Berlusconi, who resists divesting himself of his influential private T.V. channels and enjoys owning the top-flight Milan soccer team, had an impatient contempt for state institutions. Like many other twentieth-century businessmen in politics, he sees little distinction between the health of his own enterprises and that of the public domain. Italians voted for a Second Republic; were they going to get a Third Empire?

The need to withdraw the decree that curbed the magistrates' powers has at least temporarily clipped Berlusconi's wings. In itself, the use of pretrial detention would count as a severe infringement of civil liberties in the United States. But the prime minister's effort to dismantle the practice at this point seemed a blatant effort to halt the anti-corruption drive as it was touching his own private interests. His restive allies may yet desert this government. Nonetheless, no matter what Berlusconi's personal future, we would be foolish to believe that Italy is not undergoing a profound institutional transformation.

Which changes surprised my friends and most of us who follow Italian politics? Young voters swung to the right; Sicilians and Southerners proved willing to punish the long-ensconced Christian Democrats. Most fundamentally, observers underestimated the effects of the new, complicated electoral law, even though prior revisions in the voting system have repeatedly convulsed Italian regimes during the last century. By sharply reducing proportional representation, this latest revision undercuts stable party shares of power and undermines the old ligaments of patronage and local loyalties. It has for the foreseeable future made Italian politics less provincial and more fluid—American-like in its new dependence on the media but without the pre-existing bipartisan framework that structures the national mood in our country in all but the most turbulent decades.

Italian political activity traditionally rested on innumerable intraparty grass-roots conversations on the one hand and mediation on the other. The political class got favors done and negotiated between humble constituents and a baroque network of regulatory systems. Now the media mediate, and Berlusconi understands how to create a coalition across the ether. Until the former Communists of the Democratic Party of the Left and the reformist shards of Christian Democracy learn to carry an appealing joint message beyond their local redoubts, their adversaries will have time to construct a new political base.

Americans should pay attention. The new coalition is not just a reformist reflex. Italian politics sometimes emulates American and northern European trends but also prefigures new constellations of opinion. The commemorations of World War II, whether at Normandy or Civitella, should not disguise the fact that Europe's postwar era, along with the war, is irrevocably past.

CHARLES S. MAIER is a professor of history and European studies at Harvard University.

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

LEFT OUT

By Fred Barnes

President Clinton would like to compromise on health care reform, but he can't. He's insisted to moderate Democrats that he's "not a purist" and simply wants a bill that honors, in practically any fashion, his commitment to universal health insurance coverage. He's told Republican Senator David Durenberger of Minnesota that he's eager to deal, only he doesn't want to be dragged too far to the right by Senate GOP leader Bob Dole. And on July 19 he sounded flexible to the extreme in a talk to the National Governors' Conference in Boston. He not only said something less than universal coverage is acceptable—95 percent, maybe; he signaled a compromise on abortion coverage. Clinton thanked Governor Robert Casey of Pennsylvania for his "attempt to resolve the abortion issue." Casey, a pro-lifer, wants abortion kept entirely out of health care legislation.

Given these sentiments, why can't the president step forward and arrange a compromise? His allies won't let him. Look what happened after his Boston remarks. Clinton was instantly assaulted by senior White House aides, the liberal majority of Democrats in Congress and liberal interest groups. His own aides put out the word that the president had been misunderstood; he wasn't backing away from 100 percent coverage through an employer mandate. A senior official says adviser George Stephanopoulos "knew immediately" how House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt would react to Clinton's conciliatory line: unfavorably. He was right. (Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell is a separate case, hav-

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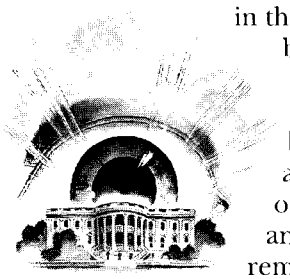
ing privately endorsed 95 percent coverage.) Others from Capitol Hill, like Democratic Senator Paul Simon of Illinois, called the White House to complain. The next day, Simon organized a mock lottery in which ping-pong balls were drawn naming the five senators who wouldn't get coverage under a 95 percent plan. By then, the president had already knuckled under.

The core of Clinton's problem is his strategy. Hillary Rodham Clinton and her health care aide, Ira Magaziner, designed the administration's plan to appease those who favor a single-payer system. With these and other liberals on board, the White House could inch toward the center, gathering enough votes to create a congressional majority. This is known as the "left-in" strategy, similar to the "right-in" strategy Ronald Reagan followed in 1981 to win approval of deep tax and spending cuts. But Reagan had just led a landslide that brought in twelve Republican senators and thirty-three House members, and he was all the more popular after responding gamely to having been shot. Clinton lacks that kind of presidential clout. He'd have been better off with the "center-out" strategy pushed by Al From, president of the moderate Democratic Leadership Council. Under it, Clinton would have proposed a stripped-down bill minus universal coverage and an employer mandate, locked up centrist Democratic and Republican votes and then moved as far left, or right, as necessary to produce a majority.



In theory, the left-in approach works fine. In practice, "the left won't let him move," says a senior Clinton official. Harold Ickes, the deputy White House chief of staff, is described by an associate as "all or nothing" on health care. He doesn't want Clinton to move toward the center—and he's in charge of getting a Clinton-oriented bill passed. Stephanopoulos is more pragmatic, as is Chief of Staff Leon Panetta, but they aren't prodding the president to compromise, either. The impulse comes from Clinton himself. Counselor David Gergen favors a deal, but he's gone to the State Department. The First Lady? As Clinton tries to be more conciliatory, she grows more strident. The day the president hinted to the governors that he would consider less than universal coverage, she declared, "The only thing that will work is to get everybody in the system." The next day, she said the 20 percent of the people who don't want universal coverage are "freeloaders ... who don't deserve respect." Unlike her husband, Rodham Clinton invokes the rhetoric of rights and morality. Health care is the "right" of all Americans, she says, and assuring that they get it is a matter of "social justice." This isn't language crafted to appeal to moderates or shape a compromise.

Making matters worse is Clinton's histrionic pledge, in his State of the Union address last January, to veto any health bill that doesn't provide universal coverage. Clinton even held up the pen he'd use to veto such a bill. Now the president has a problem similar to George Bush's when Bush wanted to renege on his promise of "no new taxes." Any shift away from the pledge is seen as a betrayal. "The president ought to be in there, standing up for universal coverage as he did when he spoke to the joint session," Simon said on the Senate floor on June 20. Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota added: "I call on the president ... to be crystal clear that he is going to live up to the commitment that he made to the people of this country, when he held that pen forward." O.K., O.K., Clinton responded later that day.

Still another impediment to compromise is the new White House argument that any bill without universal coverage will make things worse. "If we tinker around with the system and don't try to do something comprehensive, we could actually make it worse for ordinary Americans," Clinton said on June 20. "If you just try to do insurance reforms, you could wind up with higher rates for middle-class people and lower levels of coverage. That is the essence." Since the American Medical Association, the AFL-CIO and other groups favor universal coverage, he said, "that's a very good sign that they have analyzed this in the same way that we have." Perhaps, but it's a bad sign for the prospects of cutting a deal. Now, says a senior Clinton adviser, "it's damn difficult to accept anything less than universal."

Clinton has left the fate of health care reform in the hands of Mitchell and Gephardt. "They've been for a Democrats-only strategy from the beginning," complains a Clinton aide who favors compromise. It's Democrats-only because a bill calling for universal coverage and an employer mandate will attract only one GOP senator, James Jeffords of Vermont, and probably zero votes in the House. "It reminds me of the economic stimulus package [in 1993]," says the Clinton aide. "Mitchell and Gephardt said, 'Leave it to us,' and the president did." The package was defeated in the Senate. Without support from moderate Democrats, Clinton-style health care will lose in the Senate, too. The threat of this prompted Clinton, reduced to cheerleading, to invite Democratic senators to the White House for one-on-one sessions in late July.

Maybe this will work, but not likely. True, Clinton's session with Alabama Senator Howell Heflin was harmonious. They agreed a bill without universal coverage might drive up insurance costs. So Heflin's on board? No. Another invitee was Lousiana Senator John Breaux. To show Breaux's sympathy for Clinton, the White House circulated an op-ed by the senator that extolled the president personally. But Breaux added: "Health care reform cannot be accomplished by building a coalition based on the extremes of the right or the left. It can only be achieved by a coalition that starts in the political center.... The gravest threats to the passage of legislation this year are the liberals who demand that we do everything all at once and hope we get it right, as well as conservatives who demand that we do nothing at all."

Breaux is right about conservatives, most of them Republicans. They'll be delirious if no bill passes. All the better to campaign this fall against feeble

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Democrats who control Washington but can't enact a health care bill. But what if Clinton backs off universal coverage and an employer mandate (and abortion as a required benefit)? Republicans would be thrown on the defensive, clearing the way for a centrist alternative stressing insurance reform. There's still time, and Clinton is inclined to go for it, if only his allies will let him. •

The roots of Argentina's anti-Semitism.

CRY FOR THEM

By Robert Weisbrot

"Everybody was stunned. Nobody expected this horror," an Argentine Jewish woman said of the bombing in Buenos Aires on July 18, which killed about 100 people, wounded more than 200 and leveled a seven-story building that had anchored the nation's Jewish life for fifty years. Rubén Ezra Beraja, president of a federation of 130 Jewish organizations that had shared the building with the Argentine Jewish Mutual Association, declared the bombing "the worst massacre of Jews in the Americas since the Colonial era." Still, for many of the estimated 300,000 Jews in Argentina, the shock was partly one of recognition: a reminder that their country has afforded them, at best, a precarious safety periodically broken by acts of terror.

At first blush, Argentines had much to lament but little to atone for. All evidence suggests that the bomb was planted by a foreign terrorist group, the Partisans of God, that had surfaced in Lebanon in April with a vow of "all-out war" against Israel. Many Argentine Christians, moreover, attended a July 21 rally of 150,000 organized by the Jewish community called "Standing Up to Terror." President Carlos Saúl Menem also showed solidarity with his Jewish brothers after the bombing. "In [my] grief, I am also a victim," he declared, pledging every resource of his government and full investigative authority to agents of the Israeli Mossad and other foreign intelligence services.

None of these apparently encouraging developments, however, could quite extinguish the bitter cynicism that overtook Jewish neighborhoods. Many angrily recalled the car-bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires on March 17, 1992, in which thirty people died and more than 100 were seriously wounded. Following that attack, a foreign fundamentalist group, Islamic Holy War, claimed responsibility, and President Menem vowed to bring the murderers to justice—but the investigation led nowhere. Looking back on the embassy bombing, a young Jew takes little comfort from Menem's recent assurances: "Many Jews thought it foolish that the president says he is sorry this happened. He is always sorry, but these things keep happening." The record of Argentine Jewish history gives these remarks a powerful and somber resonance.

Jews have found Argentina an often generous but dangerously unstable host since they arrived in large numbers from Russia, Poland and other European countries in the late nineteenth century. These early immigrants enjoyed cultural freedom and the opportunity to rise in an expanding economy, first as workers in farm colonies and flourishing factories and later as skilled artisans, businessmen and professionals. Today their descendants comprise an educated and prosperous middle class in Argentine society. Yet at no time have they known the tolerance or physical security that would give full meaning to their other attainments.

Recurrent surges of bigotry and violence have often made Argentina seem less a haven for Jews than for anti-Semites. Synagogue bombings, swastikas desecrating Jewish cemeteries, shootings, kidnappings and well-financed campaigns of slander and harassment have been among the recurring offenses. The perpetrators have also varied, from hate-mongers parading military insignia to Nazi war criminals to guerrilla bands to garden-variety thugs.

Argentina's volatile treatment of its Jews reflects its own divided character since winning independence from the Spanish empire in the early nineteenth century. The country has forged democratic institutions and proclaimed a commitment to pluralism that befits its history of encouraging immigration. Yet authoritarian, nationalist and xenophobic traditions dating to Colonial times have proved equally tenacious, compounded by economic instability, military coups, government repression, armed insurgencies and acts of terror. Jews have not been the sole or even the most numerous victims of these forces. But in a society suspicious of foreigners, Jews have always been the most suspect; in a land of vulnerable citizens, Jews have been by far the most vulnerable.

Anti-Semitic attitudes suffuse key sectors of the population, emanating from conservative, nationalist institutions of authority such as the military (which excludes Jews from the officer corps), police forces and elements of the Catholic Church. While respected prelates and Catholic journals like *Criterio* condemn anti-Semitism as un-Christian, subtler prejudices remain, such as sermons that perpetuate the Jewish "Christ-killer" image. Among many unbroken links between church and state is the nation's constitutional mandate that the president be a Catholic. Economic resentments sharpen anti-Semitic feelings amid soaring inflation, sluggish productivity, a crippling foreign debt and harsh class conflict. When Jews first came to Argentina they were disdained as mere peddlers. Today, Jews successful in business are derided as nouveau riche.

Extremist ideologies have crystallized the often nebulous hostility toward Jews into virulent stereotypes, anchored by cries of a Jewish Communist conspiracy

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against the Argentine state. Such charges have the ring of legitimacy because a disproportionate number of the country's leftists, particularly Communists, have been Jewish—even though most Jews traditionally have supported democratic and anti-Communist candidates. As Jews have consolidated their position in the middle class, these charges have increasingly coexisted with warnings that they are the insidious agents of foreign bankers.

Denunciations of "Zionist imperialism" have also given rabble-rousers on both ends of the political spectrum an effective euphemism for anti-Semitic ravings in a land where most professed Jews are Zionist. In 1971 an extreme nationalist teaching at the University of Buenos Aires, Walter Beveraggi Allende, warned his Christian countrymen that Israeli soldiers aimed to seize the Southern third of Argentina and convert it into a new Jewish state to be called "Andinia." Recycled versions of this conspiracy theory continue to circulate widely. In January 1986, according to the Anti-Defamation League, the Buenos Aires daily *La Nación* reported without qualification that hundreds of Jewish backpackers were combing Southern Argentina to study the climate, flora, fauna and potential resources in preparation for settlement by 10,000 "Israelis" within ten years.

Argentine authorities have largely been divided between those unable to halt anti-Semitic agitation and those unwilling to do so. During the government's "Dirty War" against leftist rebels in the late 1970s, when the military, the police and fascist groups worked closely to purge "undesirables," Jews made up an estimated 15 percent of the 9,000 *desaparecidos*—civilian suspects who were detained incommunicado and often tortured and killed. Since the restoration of democracy in 1983 the Jewish community has received warm support from civilian leaders, but anti-Semitic violence and vandalism have continued unabated, including a gang-beating of the country's leading rabbi in January.

The July 18 bombing may have been the single most demoralizing event in Argentine Jewish history, not just for the loss of life but also for the ravaging of Jewish collective memory. The Argentine Jewish Mutual Association, founded in 1894 as a burial society, had evolved into a cultural, educational and welfare organization—a unique documentary source for a century of Jewish communal life. The bombing obliterated its records, together with the largest collection of Judaica in South America: in all, some 70,000 books, magazines, paintings and archives were destroyed.

Most Jews seem convinced that the bombing was not simply a random tragedy of foreign origin, but the culmination of more than a half-century of anti-Semitic lawlessness in Argentina. Their suspicions are deepened by the fact that the bomb exploded just after the regular meeting time of "Project Witness," a group that has documented the Argentine government's protection of more than 1,000 Nazis, including war criminals, since 1945. Only a chance postponement of the meeting spared the workers. Still, Jews widely shared the cynical view of Jorge Halperín, a columnist writing in the journal *Clarín*, that Argentina offered a logical site for the bombing: "There is anti-Semitism in non-Islamic sectors, and weakness in the system of prevention and punishment."

Despite President Menem's valiant efforts to repair the damage, the barriers to a more secure Jewish community remain formidable. His request to the Mossad stems partly from Argentina's chronic failure in investigating and punishing anti-Semitic attacks. The popular reaction to the bombing is also problematic: many Argentines voiced outrage on behalf of their Jewish countrymen, but others lamented only the deaths of Christian passers-by. A worker stopped a young ticket salesman in Buenos Aires a day after the bombing and said bitterly, "A terrible tragedy." Then, unaware that the salesman was Jewish, he added: "What good luck it was only the Jews!"

In the wake of the bombing some Jews have vowed greater activism for Jewish rights, while others have resolved to leave Argentina (more than 75,000 have settled in Israel alone since 1948). If history is a guide, though, the great majority of Jews will continue to cope as best they can in a nation alternately welcoming and forbidding. And they will hope that Argentines may yet undertake, in the words of Rabbi Leon Klenicki, "a reckoning of the soul," to acknowledge and at last to purge that spirit of violence and intolerance that has stained the country's history. Otherwise, the Jews can expect no end to their ordeal but, at best, another fragile interlude.

ROBERT WEISBROT, a professor of American history at Colby College, is the author of *The Jews of Argentina* (Jewish Publication Society).

Inside the Israel-Jordan pact.

VIRTUAL PEACE

By Martin Peretz

Like some grand old houses that are rented out for weddings, the White House is now made available for sit-downs between Arabs and Jews. It was made available for just such a purpose on September 13, 1993, and it was made available again on July 25 for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Jordan's King Hussein to sign a peace agreement confirming what the world already knew: that their two countries had been at peace, more or less, for nearly a quarter of a century. Actually, U.S. diplomacy had as much to do with these two *sulkhas* as the proprietors of the grand houses have to do with love, proposals and marriage. (Catering for the peace process is really just workfare for Warren Christopher.) But what is called the Washington Declaration between Israel and Jor

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Going to Hell in a Handbasket

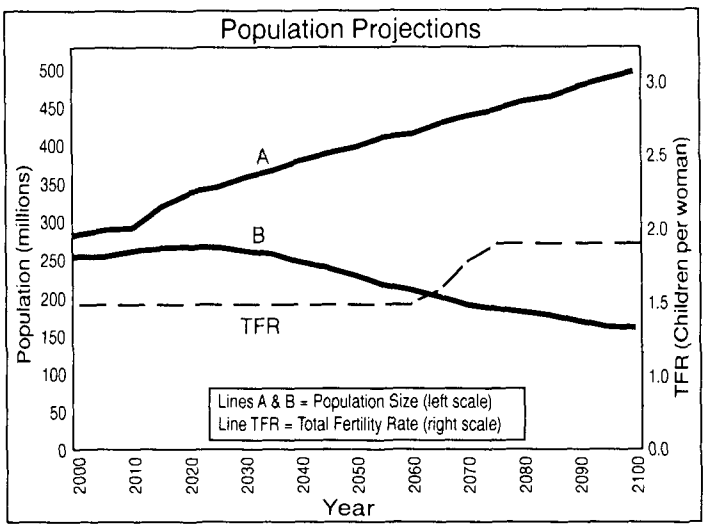
That headline may not be scholarly, and the tone is perhaps too flippant for a deadly serious matter. Still, it would be hard to find a more apt description of where our country is heading as a direct result of the relentless growth of our population.

The arguments for first halting, then reversing, U.S. population growth would seem so compelling as to raise the question "Why isn't it being done?".

Line A shows where our population is headed with current levels of fertility and immigration— to nearly 400 million by 2050, and to nearly a half billion by the end of the next century!

Such population growth would surely lead to disaster for future generations of Americans. It would have profound impacts upon the environment, on renewable resources like farmland, forests and water, and on our society itself.

A smaller population would help the nation deal with the social, environmental and resource problems that confront us, yet very few of our politicians and pundits even consider the idea.



On the assumption that they are held back by unwarranted fears, we will try to explain briefly by what relatively gentle adjustments we could turn U.S. population growth around.

Line B shows what could be achieved with the "two child family" and with immigration reduced to the levels that prevailed for much of this century.

If parents indeed "stop at two" it would lead to a total fertility rate (TFR) of about 1.5 children, because not all women have children, and some have only one. A national TFR of 1.5 would make possible a gradual turnaround in the population growth that drives our social and environmental problems.

We Need to Reduce Immigration

But the two child family alone will not enable the nation to reach a smaller population size. It would need to be accompanied by a substantial reduction in current levels of immigration.

In 1900 we were a nation of less than 76 million. Almost half of the population increase since then has been post-1900 immigrants and their descendants. The Census Bureau projects that our present population of some 260 million will increase by 2050 to 392 million (middle projection), or even to 522 million (high projection).

Of the population growth anticipated for the 21st century, nearly 90 percent will be post-2000 immigrants and their descendants. In other words, immigration is the driving force behind a disastrous surge of population growth.

The average annual level of recorded gross immigration from 1924 through the 1960s was 198,000. Immigration is now over a million per year. If we were willing to bring net immigration down to 200,000 a year, our demographic future would improve dramatically.

If we moved now to the "two child family" and concurrently brought immigration under control at an annual level of 200,000, it would lead in the next century to the population projection shown in the graph *(Line B)*.

By the middle of the next century parents could even be encouraged to have more children, for a total fertility rate of 1.9 *(Line TFR)*. That rate would allow our nation to maintain a constant population size of around 150 million.

If, at the same time, we change our lifestyles to reduce unnecessary consumption, and use energy and materials far more efficiently, such a population size should be sustainable for the very long term.

The Choice Is Ours

We need to choose the path leading to a sustainable U.S. population of around 150 million. To get there we would need the combination of the two child family and a moderate net immigration of 200,000 a year. What would be so difficult about that?

We need, above all, the courage to make now the decisions that would safeguard our demographic future. We urge Third World nations to bite the bullet and face up to their demographic problems. How about doing it ourselves?

NPG has recently published a paper titled, The Two Child Family, documenting the case made here. To become a member, and receive our papers on a regular basis, please send us your check today.

We are a nonprofit, national membership organization established in 1972. Contributions to NPG are tax deductible to the extent the law allows.

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dan—the public act, that is—could never have happened without the sclerotic handshake on the lawn last year. For on the very morrow of that event, the Palestinians of Jordan, or, to be more precise, those Palestinians who for more than three generations have clutched at their status as refugees, festooned their camps with black banners of mourning and went into the streets ululating that Yasir Arafat had betrayed them. On that day, also, King Hussein, who, alone among Arab rulers, bestowed on waves of displaced and mostly self-displaced Palestinians citizenship and civil rights, was freed from his indenture to their delirious politics.

In the early '80s, when Ronald Reagan and Shimon Peres had put the "Jordanian option" into play, some Palestinians, exasperated by the PLO's affinity for psychodrama, came to King Hussein and asked him to negotiate with the Israelis on their behalf. Here, basically, is what he said to them: if I succeed in getting from Israel all of the West Bank and all of Gaza and all of Arab Jerusalem except for one *shibbr* (a linear measure based on the distance between the stretched pinky and thumb), you will say that this last *shibbr* is the holy *shibbr.*

Of course, it is just possible that, had the king been more daring and the Likud less obstreperous, the Jordanian option might have won the day. But the odds, like sandbags in the street, were stacked against it. The lesson the Hashemites have taken from their history is that they cannot be too far ahead of their subjects. In 1951 Hussein's grandfather, King Abdullah, was killed (emerging from prayer at Al Aksa Mosque in Jerusalem) because news had spread, accurately, as it happens, that he was talking peace with the Jews. In 1958 Hussein's cousin, King Faisal of Iraq, and Faisal's entire family were massacred in Baghdad by a mob. However dissolute, the Baghdad Hashemites were all that stood between the polity, such as it was, and the feverish revolutionary expectations that brought them, finally, Saddam Hussein's rule. Arab politics is not kind to moderates, even if they are very rich. But those who are both rich and moderate can at least rent the acquiescence of the Arab radicals who need their money in order to cause trouble for other Arab moderates who are not rich. Such transactions are usually what is meant in the Middle East by the protective metaphor "building high walls." Sometimes, as in Kuwait, the high walls fall.

King Hussein, however, is not rich, and, although he is the senior Arab ruler, Arab politics has been particularly unkind to him. He has always had to shore up his high walls. Mostly, he has had to soothe the Palestinians who comprise half his realm. Only when they rose directly against him in 1970 did the king respond with the kind of ferocious dispatch of which his constituents doubtless had begun to think him incapable. He also has had President Hafez al-Assad of Syria to worry about. This is not an abstraction: in 1970, for example, Syrian tanks made a dread crawl to the Jordanian frontier, only to be turned back by Israel's command of the skies. And though the king might count on Jerusalem to save his country from the extremities, he has had to cope on his own with the subverting routines of his Syrian neighbors. In this neighborhood, Syria is not the only brute. Understandably, Jordan is also fearful of Ba'athist Iraq, whose leader would very much like to have *his* troops face the Jews across the river, which, despite what the old gospel song tells us, is neither deep nor wide. In any case, like his enemy Assad, Saddam Hussein allied himself with Palestinian ultras. This concentrated the king's mind.

It also led him to his most risky gambit. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, Jordan put itself among the handful of retrograde states actually to applaud the act. This entailed a treacherous break with the king's most important patron, the United States. It could be argued that had Jordan not done as it did, the country would have been torn apart by another Palestinian insurrection. The king's head might have fallen to the crowd. Consequently, Israel never really exchanged words with King Hussein over this move, empathizing perhaps a bit too axiomatically with an excuse provided by raison d'etat. Moreover, however offended Washington might have been by the Hashemite choice of comrades, it would be hard put to hold this against him for very long since it was always looking for a rationale to forgive Arafat his far less justifiable and less rational loyalty to the tyranny in Baghdad. The Bush-Baker administration had an instinctive affection for the king. In fact, in comparison with any leader of the Jewish state, it could, like the Carter administration, always find an Arab ruler it liked better—no matter whom. The leader of the Gulf war coalition slapped the king's wrist. Which brings us to now: the Gulf war was never a big thing for President Clinton, so Hussein's peculiar apostasy about Iraq was no big thing for him, either. The king's visit is an easy reconciliation.

King Hussein's behavior during the Gulf crisis was counted a much weightier betrayal by the Saudi Arabians, however. Their fate hung in the balance as the world powers decided whether or not to let Saddam have his way in Kuwait. Riyadh is not, therefore, at least vis-à-vis Amman, a forgiving place. Antique rivalries between the two clans give texture and context to the bitter disappointment with Jordan's choice in the fall of 1990. One reason these rivalries were so easily awakened was that the Jordanian king's choice signaled that he feared Iraq more than he feared Saudi Arabia, which is to say he valued Iraq more.

But the rivalries are rife and ripe without provocations. The Hashemites are descendants of the Prophet whom the British, grateful for the tribe's little rebellions against the Turks during the First World War, took from the Hejaz and installed as royalty in a sleepy town in a country that was at most an imperial caprice. It was not the reward to which they aspired and to which they thought themselves genetically entitled. After all, the house of Saud was, only yesterday, a web of raiders and traders. Yet to them was awarded by the British, and for the same reason, the prize of Mecca and Medina, along

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with, it soon turned out, the richest oil fields in the world. King Hussein must lay awake at night thinking of the might-have-beens. But, then, King Fahd may rumble about the impertinence of the impoverished pretender. These are epic quarrels. Here is a truly grand setting for a new version of "Dynasty."

Soft though the United States may be on the Jordanian royals, it has real interests, way beyond sentiment, in its relationship with the Saudi royals. The United States knows that the Saudis have not yet been sending checks to Amman, and these may well be delayed still longer because Jordan seems again to have sided with one of Riyadh's sworn enemies, the ambitious brigands of North Yemen in the war against their southern counterparts. (No one seems to have noticed, but there are people dying of cholera right now in Sana because of that war.) The United States also knows that Saudi money has already arrived in Gaza and Jericho for the PLO, an organization that, especially since 1990, has been held in contempt by its longtime paymasters. Still, the Saudis have not pressed the case against Jordan with the United States. Their intra-Arab feud notwithstanding, the princes understand the function Jordan needs to play in maintaining a countervailing balance in the region against the unappeased (and perhaps unappeasable) Palestinians and the Islamic extremists. In the end, then, the two monarchical regimes are allied even though they may not like each other at all.

For Israel, the settling of differences with Amman is a simpler matter. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres was correct when he told a press conference that "negotiations with Jordan enjoy the support of the whole country." One reason for this is that, whatever the reciprocities of the coming agreement, there are no great exchanges of territory in the offing. There are some cartographical disputes, but they are exactly that, with no great intrinsic valence for either side. Indeed, since Israel will likely give up fewer miles than Jordan wants, the transaction is seen in Jerusalem as a precedent for the more fraught negotiations yet to be held with Syria over the Golan, a precedent that says peace does not necessarily depend on the Sinai formula of total withdrawal. Although there is lingering bitterness among the Israeli population over the leveling of the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem (and over the expulsion of all Jews from that sector) when the nineteen-year Jordanian occupation began, the fact is that Hashemite Jordan has proved its intentions to live at peace with Israel. Whether Labor or Likud was in power, the two countries cooperated uninterruptedly on issues ranging from intelligence and internal security to agricultural blight. The Washington meeting was, then, a logical climax to all the years of virtual peace in the past. Though psychologically important for the region, the signed peace treaty will not be transformative. It will admit what has already been transformed and what everybody knows has already been transformed.

Still the statement ending the forty-eight-year-old state of war between Israel and Jordan will be the first agreement in the region from which something akin to real normalcy will flow, the kind of normalcy that even under the best of conditions one could not imagine flowing from an agreement with Syria, the kind of normalcy that, alas, has not been experienced even fifteen years into the signed and sealed peace with Egypt. Already, Jordan has given Israeli civil aircraft the right to fly over its territory on their way to Asia. This is only the beginning of a mutual process.

The stronger Jordan is, however, the stronger and the more meaningful the peace will be. The country is woefully poor, with a per capita income that is less than 15 percent of Israel's. Its gross national product is one-sixteenth of Israel's. Prosperity is not a cure-all for collective maladies of the soul. But Muslim fanaticism would be muted by a dose of economic growth. The kingdom's debt is enormous, some $700 million of it owed to the United States. The president has promised to try to get congressional support to cancel it. This is surely in the interest of the United States. Jordan's military capability has also been significantly diminished in air and tank power and in surveillance technology. A weak Jordan is a standing invitation to mischief from the local bullies, even if one of them, Syria, is ultimately coaxed into the peace process. And, unless the monarchy's overwhelmingly Bedouin army spiffs up, the Muslim Brothers or the local Palestinians or both may be lured to try again the politics of rage and devastation.

But Jordan can do more than preserve itself. In the tense negotiations over the next few years between Israel and the PLO, for example, a psychologically and politically more secure Amman could add to the balance of atmospheric rationality. In fact, the king has already done this by suggesting that the spiritual interests of Muslims in Jerusalem's holy places are distinguishable from the political interests of Arabs, generally, and of Palestinians, particularly. While the Saudis might disagree with Hussein on who might be the most apt guardian of the Islamic sensibility in the city, they don't disagree with his basic point. Echoing the agreement, President Clinton made remarks at the White House ceremonies recognizing the kingdom's responsibility for Muslim holy sites in the city. This must have driven Arafat apoplectic. Jerusalem is Arafat's hot button. His nutsy reaction to the Israeli statement that the king was welcome to pray on the Harim al Sharif ("They have no right to issue any invitations. It is my duty and my responsibility to invite my brothers and friends to come visit the Muslim and Christian sites, which are under Palestinian jurisdiction.") is just a small omen of tantrums yet to come. Some Palestinians are already anxious that the Washington agreement, in discussing bilateral aspects of electric power and water rights, is leaving them out of sovereign decisions with the assent or even the complicity of the U.S. administration.

Whatever the territorial dimensions and whatever the sovereign character of the place to be called Palestine, how its government governs will depend finally on who has sway over its leaders. Palestine will simply be too

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small and for decades too poor for that not to be the case. Diminutive polities—and not so diminutive ones, too—are almost always in someone's sphere of interest. What Harold Bloom calls "the anxiety of influence" is not just in the ken of poets. The Palestinians will live either with the delusionary gratifications of ecstatic politics and the cruelties that attend them or they will live with the practical gratifications of quotidian politics and the compromises that attend them. Anyone who wishes the Palestinians the first, with all the turmoil with Israel it implies, is not truly their friend. This leaves them the second option. But for that kind of politics to prevail, the sphere of influence with which they are associated cannot be that of Syria or Iraq. It would have to be Jordan—and Israel. Jordan, however, needs help to perform that function, help that only the United States can provide. That truly would be an American contribution to Middle East peace. But it may be the kind of contribution this administration hasn't the imagination to make. •

In defense of endangered species.

THE FINAL ACT

By Stephen M. Meyer

The Endangered Species Act—the poor, beleaguered Endangered Species Act—is facing congressional reauthorization later this year, and its future does not look particularly bright. Ranchers, loggers, home builders, members of the grossly misnamed "wise-use" movement and others are moving in, like a pack of wolves, to tear it to shreds. The act, they charge, is a misguided effort to save maladapted, obscure and useless creatures. It shaves percentage points off the gross national product, costs tens of thousands of jobs, tramples private property rights, wastes valuable public resources and clogs the courts with frivolous cases. The act's foes hope to restore "balance" to the legislation with a series of "people first" amendments.

Their criticisms and solutions are wrongheaded. Efforts to save America's endangered species have not hindered economic growth in any meaningful way. Nor have potential economic and social consequences been ignored. Indeed, just the opposite has happened. The act has been paralyzed by political and special interests. Certainly, there are reforms that will make the act function better, that will enable it to benefit both the economy and the environment. But the fact remains that the Endangered Species Act is our last, best hope to preserve our national biological heritage.

I.

Before we can have any meaningful discussion about how to improve the Endangered Species Act, we need first to sort through the criticisms that have been directed against it. For starters, the act's opponents, citing a handful of headline-grabbing cases, argue that it hurts the economy. According to Ron Arnold and Alan Gottlieb in their 1993 book, *Trashing the Economy*, the Endangered Species Act is "probably the single most destructive economy trasher law on the books." They couldn't be more wrong. While listing an animal as endangered may reduce the short-term profitability of a construction project or a local industry, the effects are of neither sufficient size nor duration to harm state economic performance, let alone the national economy.

I recently completed a state-by-state study examining the relationship between endangered species listings and economic growth and development. The result? The states with the most endangered species listings were also the ones with the strongest economies. These results repeated themselves no matter how economic development was measured. They persisted after taking into account a variety of differences in state and regional characteristics (population density, land area, etc.). And they were consistent from 1973, when the act was passed, through 1992.

The reason that higher numbers of endangered species are linked with stronger economic performance is that wildlife habitats are being bulldozed by rapid development and quick-profit natural resource management. For instance, Alabama, which boomed, had seventy species listed. Louisiana, its less successful near-neighbor, had twenty-one listings. Of course the relationship is not perfect, but it is obvious that fast-growing state economies and explosive development are pushing American nature off the map (see graph page 27).

It follows, then, that there is no reason to believe that any significant number of jobs would be saved—let alone gained—by watering down protection for endan-

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gered species. Oklahoma will not suddenly rocket out of recession because the specter of future endangered species listings is exorcised. California's aerospace industry will not suddenly get orders for fighter aircraft because critical habitat designations are denied. Amendments to make the Endangered Species Act more "economy friendly" do not address any real problem. As the graph points out, the act does little to thwart economic booms.

When the economic argument fails, foes of the Endangered Species Act claim that species loss is due to natural selection, not development or commerce. Rubbish. The frequency with which one encounters this baseless argument says more about the quality of science education in America's high schools and universities than anything else. Piping plovers are not "maladapted" just because they never developed the armor needed to survive being crushed by joy-riding dune buggy enthusiasts. The Houston toad is not a genetic misfit because it is unable to live with a shopping mall covering its native habitat.

The endangered species problem is fundamentally a problem of human/wildlife collisions. Human development consumes more than 200 acres every hour. About one-quarter of this loss is wetlands, where almost half of our endangered species live. As development extends into previously remote areas, other human activities follow and compound the problem even where development itself has spared critical habitats. (A critical habitat is the minimum amount of land required to halt a species' decline.)

Even in those instances where biological problems seem to be affecting the health of a species, the evidence suggests human responsibility. Consider the Florida panther. Whereas the species once covered the Southeast from South Carolina to Louisiana, perhaps just fifty animals remain in a small area of South Florida. There is good reason to believe that pollutants and pesticides with hormonelike effects may be partially responsible for fertility problems among the males. Severely limiting habitat poses two additional problems: weak traits are magnified through inbreeding; and the population is vulnerable to single catastrophes, such as Hurricane Andrew, which slammed into south Florida, killing panthers and decimating portions of their remaining habitat.

The act's critics also argue that it fails to take into account political and societal needs. Right. In theory, the act is supposed to ignore "nonbiological" factors. In reality, it has been thoroughly politicized.

What evidence is there for this? Look at how many times the act has actually been enforced. In 1992 the General Accounting Office reviewed the record of endangered species consultations by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service between 1987 and 1991. Of the 18,211 consultations, only 11 percent (2,050) resulted in formal biological opinions. The remaining 89 percent were handled informally—that is, the projects proceeded on schedule and without interference. Of the 2,050 formal opinions, 181—not even 10 percent—concluded that the proposed projects were likely to pose a threat to an endangered plant or animal. And most of these 181 projects were completed, albeit with some modification in design and construction. Thus, more than 99 percent of the projects reviewed under the act eventually proceeded unhindered or with marginal additional time and economic costs.

Were the consultations without merit? Hardly. The fact that more than 200 species have been listed since 1990 and that 1,000 or more imperiled species await action drives the point home. Rather, the reason for the abundance of "nondecisions" and approvals is simple: political, economic and social considerations figure prominently at all stages of the endangered species decision-making process. A 1989 GAO report of the spotted owl listing, for example, concluded that "Fish and Wildlife Service management substantively changed the body of scientific evidence.... The revisions had the effect of changing the report from one that emphasized the dangers facing the owl to one that could more easily support denying the listing petition." Richard Tobin's *The Expendable Future* and a number of other academic studies offer further evidence of such heavy-handed tampering.

Indeed, the very senators, representatives and governors who rail the loudest against the politicization of the act are among the most potent forces who routinely intervene on behalf of special interests. In 1976, for example, the Fish and Wildlife Service proposed establishing critical habitats for the grizzly bear in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. The agency was forced to back down, however, when members of the Senate Appropriations Committee made it clear to Interior Department officials that with budget time approaching far more was endangered than the grizzly. Ten years later Senator Alan Simpson of Wyoming held up the 1985 reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act for three years to demonstrate his displeasure at government plans to reintroduce the wolf into Yellowstone National Park. In both cases the politicians were representing the interests of ranchers who feared that the reintroduction of large predators would threaten their herds.

The political appointees who populate the top echelons of government agencies exert their influence on the act, too. How else to explain the vast differences between Ronald Reagan's Interior Department and those that preceded and followed it—despite the fact that the bureaucracy remained largely the same? Before Reagan made James Watt interior secretary, the number of endangered species listings averaged about thirty a year but then plummeted to eight a year during his tenure. After Watt's departure the annual number of listings rebounded to forty-five.

Governmental infighting also politicizes the endangered species process. Federal agencies, such as the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and the Army Corps of Engineers, as well as state agencies, have

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Babbitt Redux

When Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt traveled to Miami's Hyatt Regency to speak before the Everglades Coalition in January, he expected to be greeted by pro-business hecklers—a typical response to an appearance by the chief environmental cop in a Democratic administration. Sure enough, sugar farmers were on hand to accuse him of wrecking their livelihood with his Everglades restoration plans. What he didn't anticipate, though, was the throng of environmentalists who berated him for kowtowing to industry.

Babbitt came to Washington with a reputation as a deal-maker, someone who could forge a consensus among sworn enemies. Yet much of what he's done at Interior has alienated his friends and given comfort to his foes. (The Miami encounter, he says, was "emblematic of all my frustrations.") The problem is Babbitt's approach to land-management imbroglios, including those generated by the Endangered Species Act (ESA): he focuses on entire ecosystems rather than on their individual parts. Instead of wielding a heavy federal hand, he articulates general solutions and lets the locals hash out the details. Yet this delicate touch has its price: eighteen months into the job, Babbitt is still looking for a victory.

Mainstream environmentalists tend to be national in outlook; as such, they favor national solutions, like the federally administered ESA, and generally distrust local authorities, which they believe are dominated by local extractive industries. Babbitt more or less agreed until he read a 1989 essay about grazing management in Swiss mountain villages by Donald Worster, an environmental historian. Babbitt says the essay convinced him that "management of the commons only works when there is a big buy-in at the local level." In other words, to preserve the ESA, he had to come up with solutions that were locally palatable.

His first chance to do so came in two cases more complex than, say, the ESA's protection of the bald eagle: the flap over the gnatcatcher in Southern California and efforts to preserve the Balcones escarpment near Austin, Texas. "In each," he says, "it was clear to me, for different reasons, that we had no chance at all without deep local involvement."

California proved to be Babbitt's ESA crucible. In 1991 Governor Pete Wilson endorsed a voluntary approach to conserving the coastal sage scrub from Los Angeles to San Diego, prime turf not only for the remaining 2,000 pairs of gnatcatchers but also for home builders. For two years talks between environmentalists and developers went no-where. Then Babbitt stepped in. His goal was to produce a comprehensive habitat conservation plan that would protect the gnatcatcher, prevent future listings of other species and allow some development to continue. Politically, this would be no easy task: while the four-and-a-half-inch gnatcatcher lives in only four counties, Babbitt's plan would surely ripple out to California's 1994 governor's race, and even to the 1996 presidential election, when Bill Clinton will need the state's electoral votes.

In March, the Interior Department listed the gnatcatcher as "threatened," making Wilson's voluntary approach mandatory. But the department also allowed some development to continue under the ESA's provisions for incidental "take." Babbitt wanted to avoid the debacle of the 1988 listing of the kangaroo rat, which froze most economic activity and provided anti-ESA ammunition to the likes of Rush Limbaugh. Almost immediately, Interior approved the $1 billion San Joaquin Hills tollway, which would plow through gnatcatcher territory. It was at that point that the delicate balance frayed. Environmentalists sued to block the road. Landowners, meanwhile, filed their own challenges—and last May, Federal Judge Stanley Sporkin invalidated the listing. A month later he changed his mind, but asked Interior to produce the data on which the listing was based. Unfortunately, the scientist who collected it had thrown it away.

Babbitt had equally bad luck in Austin. For years, the city had hotly debated how to protect a 40,000-acre watershed that is home to endangered birds and seven kinds of cave bug, all of whom live squarely in the path of booming growth. The Balcones escarpment was a perfect location for corporate offices; the only thing keeping the area from being paved over was a land-acquisition plan, financed by a local bond issue that had to be approved by voters.

Babbitt campaigned personally for the bond issue—his wife's family is from central Texas—but the "wise-use" movement campaigned just as hard against it. Ironically, the decisive blow was delivered not by developers, but by environmentalists, chiefly the local Earth First! chapter, which campaigned *against* the plan. In a special election last November, the cave bugs lost by a percentage point. "The polls said we had it," Babbitt recalls bitterly.

While the Everglades is not directly affected by the ESA, the wet grassland is home to several endangered and threatened species, including the Florida panther. Here, too, Babbitt entered the dispute well after it heated up. A federal lawsuit charging that agricultural runoff was polluting the Everglades had produced thirty-seven other suits involving sugar growers, the state, the local water management district and the federal government. Until the mess was untangled, the glades would keep slowly dying.

After negotiating with one of the major sugar growers, Babbitt kicked the question of a settlement to Florida's legislature, a body so sugar-dominated that cane juice flows from the drinking fountains. ("An absolutely wretched forum," says David Guest of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund.) This spring the legislature disgorged a bill that will generate more than $450 million in Everglades cleanup funds—half from the sugar industry and half from local tax revenues.

Predictably, some sugar growers feel the settlement is too favorable to the environmentalists. Local and national enviros, meanwhile, denounce it as too *soft*—even though two years ago they were prepared to settle for only $40 million from the sugar industry, one-sixth of what they ended up with. Last May, when Babbitt visited Everglades National Park for the bill-signing ceremony, the cream of southern Florida's environmentalists showed up to protest. Typical of Babbitt, he went over to talk to them in the small corral where the Park Police had confined them. The second time he was interrupted, he walked away.

The strength of Babbitt's approach, it seems, is also its weakness: by trying to make everyone happy, he pleases almost no one. Of course, the ESA doesn't require that he please anyone; it merely endows him with sweeping powers. It's too bad that, in the political climate of 1994, he finds himself unable to use them.

BILL GIFFORD

Bill Gifford is a staff writer at *Washington City Paper.*

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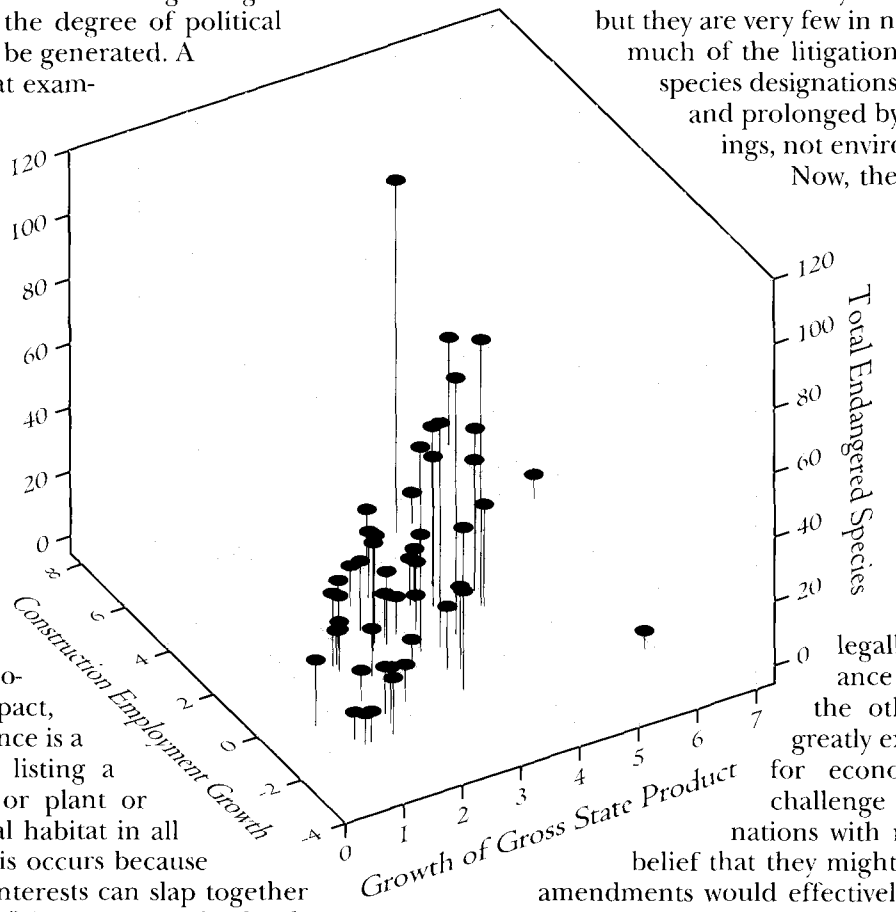
missions and clients that invariably conflict with endangered species listings and critical habitat designations. The Forest Service sided with timber interests in opposing the listing of the northern spotted owl in 1989 and the Jemenez Mountain salamander a year later. In fact, one of the reasons the spotted owl controversy dragged on for so long was that three government agencies—the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management—were fighting bureaucratic turf battles.

All of these nonbiological pressures feed back directly into the process. In particular, the quantity and quality of biological data deemed sufficient to make a case for listing a species or designating a habitat becomes captive to the degree of political controversy likely to be generated. A recent GAO study that examined reasons for delays in six endangered species cases found that three of the four instances where questions about biological sufficiency were cited as the reason for delay also involved opposition from economic interests. While it makes sense that the level of scientific confidence should be greater in cases of serious economic or social impact, the actual consequence is a strong bias against listing a threatened animal or plant or designating a critical habitat in all but trivial cases. This occurs because concerned special interests can slap together the "estimated costs" in money and jobs that they claim will result from the listing, claims that are never subjected to rigorous substantiation. At the same time, the biological data to support a listing often take years to assemble. Since biological studies make their uncertainties explicit, they are easy targets for criticism. The result is either a decision not to take action or a delay that seals the fate of the creature in question.

The call for more balance in the endangered species process is right on the mark. But it is not the mark that the act's opponents are aiming at. The current imbalance weighs heavily against America's wildlife. Indeed, the very reason we have endangered species crises is that there is no effective advocacy for the environment until the final, desperate moment. Only when faced with eleventh-hour court orders and legal injunctions sought by environmental interests do the opponents of endangered species protection call for balance.

Finally, ESA opponents claim that private property rights are sacrificed to the act at virtually every step. To hear them tell it, thousands of Americans are in danger of losing their homes and businesses to federal "takings" under the law. But as Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt noted recently, a search of court records found that "in the twenty years of this act, when we've listed some 800 species, there has not been a single case alleging a taking under the Endangered Species Act."

Critics of the act add that it has been an invitation for groundless suits by anti-development forces trying to halt projects they oppose for personal or philosophical reasons. There certainly have been such cases, but they are very few in number. The fact is, much of the litigation over endangered species designations has been initiated and prolonged by opponents of listings, not environmentalists.



Now, the opponents of the act want it amended to warp the legal process in ways that will end serious enforcement of the law. On the one hand, they are pushing to remove the existing right of public interest groups and citizens to intervene legally to force compliance with the law. On the other, they want to greatly expand the avenues for economic interests to challenge listings and designations with no more than the belief that they might be harmed. Such amendments would effectively destroy vigorous and balanced enforcement of the act.

II.

So, what do we do? How do we improve wildlife protection while reducing the likelihood and intensity of clashes with economic interests?

All of the amendments offered by the act's opponents have the same goal: to delay federal intervention on behalf of an endangered species as long as possible, if not entirely. One proposed amendment calls for exhaustive economic impact analyses to be reviewed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics prior to a listing or habitat designation. Another proposal would mandate a virtually endless series of public hearings and reviews of the scientific information for a proposed listing (always

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a breezy process, as anyone who has subjected his or her work to peer review can attest). The effect of these changes, of course, will be to turn every proposed listing, every habitat designation, into a political and social crisis. Legal challenges will multiply and the political, economic and environmental costs of endangered species protection will soar. The changes, in short, will have the perverse effect of proving the act's critics right: enforcement will be an even bigger mess.

Hope lies in the opposite direction. Early engagement. Babbitt and others are arguing that the best chance for avoiding collisions between endangered species protection and economic growth is to integrate ecological concerns into development or land management plans from the beginning. Right now, such considerations are at best after-thoughts. And the legal requirements to compel some form of ecological due diligence are limp, little more than checklists and forms. True, neither economic nor environmental interests are likely to gain as much as if they were free to have all their preferences, but this ain't the movies, and it is silly to pretend otherwise.

What do we need for early engagement to function? For starters—and this is the tough one—there has to be a collective realization: businesses have to understand that preserving wildlife and habitats is as important as economic growth; environmentalists have to know that economic growth is as important as protecting nature.

It's not as hard as one might think. In Massachusetts, where I serve as a conservation commissioner, I spend a lot of time with developers and landowners, walking their properties, pointing out the effects a project might have on the local habitat. More often than not, these people are completely unaware of the plants and animals on their land. And when they learn about the ecology, they are often willing to compromise, to alter development plans and even to voluntarily set aside areas for protection. In short, they are far more amenable to caring for the environment than the radical green rhetoric would have us believe.

Businesspeople—one hopes—are also not unaware of economics. It makes sense for them to understand a project's ecological implications before they spend big money on design, engineering and construction. It makes sense for them to know, too, how they can increase their returns by preserving the environment they've already built on. Toward this end, organizations such as the Maryland-based Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Council work with companies to promote habitat-enhancing projects that also help the corporate bottom line. Some solutions are absurdly simple—allowing regal lawns to return to a natural state, for instance, can save a firm tens of thousands of dollars annually on watering, fertilizer, mowing and seeding. Other solutions involve more elaborate restoration projects that yield longer-term payoffs.

What about the environmentalists? They have to recognize that they have an important stake in solid economic growth. For one thing, people are more favorably inclined toward environmental protection when there is confidence in the economy and they are not afraid of losing their jobs. For another, some environmental goals can be furthered by intelligent development and land management practices—especially in heavily developed regions. Artificial wetlands, for example, are being built to contain and clean up storm water runoff from new developments. These artificial wetlands bring new and productive habitat to areas that lost native wetlands decades ago.

Cooperation can pay off. In Maine, the timber industry and conservationists are working together to try to understand the natural history of the pine marten, a weasel-like animal with a precarious future. Their joint effort now, while the marten population is still relatively healthy, may avoid a future conflict over drastic measures to save the species. (See, for example, the spotted owl controversy.)

For a strategy of early engagement to work, we must also shift the scale of our thinking from protecting species to protecting landscape-sized habitats. Currently, the Fish and Wildlife Service will fix on a given animal or plant and then try to determine the critical habitat required to halt its decline. Focusing so much attention on the plight of a single "endangered species"—more often than not a plant or animal that no one knew existed—trivializes the importance of preserving the remnants of America's natural heritage and encourages ridiculous metaphysical calculations: owls versus loggers, moss versus highways.

This reductive approach also favors "politically correct" furry and feathered animals, or species that might serve an immediate human purpose. Did anyone think twice about the endangered Pacific yew before it was found to be a source of taxol, which may work against ovarian cancer? And what about nature's more menacing or less aesthetic creations? Don Henley is not likely to volunteer his services for a "Save the Timber Rattlers" benefit concert. In general, reptiles, amphibians, nongame fish, insects and lower plants have been shoved to the side in the endangered species debate, the victims of bad P.R. Consequently, the scant funds available for species recovery are spent on a tiny number of high-profile critters.

A more productive, flexible and ecologically sound approach would be to focus on landscape protection. After all, endangered species are really just a symptom of a much larger problem: irreplaceable habitat is being destroyed by pollution and development. Remember, more than 90 percent of the old-growth forest in the Pacific Northwest was destroyed before the spotted owl reared its head. Working at the landscape level, habitat and species protection can be examined on a larger scale and traded off among public and private lands. The burden of protecting a local wildlife resource could be spread out across a region rather than imposed on a single owner, with green corridors linking main habitat areas. Animals are generally reluctant to adhere to

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property lines. Where especially important habitat exists on private lands, landscape level preservation may suggest sensible land swaps.

Which leads to another element, perhaps the linchpin, of an early engagement strategy: we need detailed information about the status and distribution of wildlife and habitat on public and private lands. How can we know what to save—and what can be traded off—unless we have a comprehensive inventory of North American flora and fauna?

Unfortunately, the mechanism to do this—the National Biological Survey—is grossly underfinanced. And it is being blocked by the very interests likely to benefit most from it: private property owners, who refuse to allow biological surveyors on their land. If the environmentalists are hyping their endangered species claims with false data, then the National Biological Survey will expose these distortions. But the property rights activists want to have it both ways. They fear that surveyors on their land might discover a new plant or creature that would hinder development. What they don't seem to realize is that if they have threatened species on their lands, the species will be discovered anyway.

The primary advantage of the survey is this: information will be available well in advance of a development project. Projects can be planned with preservation in mind; crises can be avoided. In the mid-1980s, for example, Waste Management Inc. wanted to build a landfill near San Jose. The proposed site, however, was also the habitat of the threatened bay checkerspot butterfly. Working with local conservation groups in California and the Fish and Wildlife Service, the firm devised a conservation plan. As a result, it got its landfill with a minimum of effort and without the hassles of litigation. The time and money saved more than covered the costs of preserving the habitat. Not everyone chose as wisely as Waste Management. United Technologies Corp., a defense contractor, wanted to build on the butterfly's habitat, too, but it was unwilling to amend its plans. The result? It spent much more on legal fees in a futile attempt to block the listing than it would have spent to change its plans to accommodate the butterfly.

A strategy of early engagement also requires property owners to care for the habitats on their land. Unfortunately, even when industry and private property owners want to be good public citizens, there are many instances where land pricing, property tax policies and local land use regulations skew the economic calculus in ways that force a confrontation between sound business practices and sound ecological management.

For instance, it is substantially cheaper for a developer to build on virgin land (seashore, meadow, wetland) than to redevelop marginally used or abandoned property in the downtown business district. Paradoxically, preservation of America's urban business environment—from the largest cities to the smallest towns—is tied inexorably to preservation of its natural environment. We can assist urban renewal and habitat protection by revamping the tax code with tax credits for redevelopment projects and tax penalties for those who take over untouched wildlife habitats. Likewise, tax credits should be available for property owners who sign conservation and stewardship agreements with the government, and who derive income from lands where rare animals or plants are allowed to thrive. Financial and technical assistance for habitat restoration should also be made available to them, just as we provide assistance for farmers. These people are doing a public service of national significance, and are without question far more deserving of tax subsidies than tobacco growers and mohair producers.

Finally, for early engagement to work, the management of public lands must be brought into the twentieth century. Why should private land managers and owners follow sound economic and ecological practices when the people who work our federal lands don't have to? We should greatly increase fees and severance taxes for those extracting resources from public lands, whether the resource is vegetation, water, energy or minerals. Those who work public lands do so for private gain—and they should pay accordingly. If these sagebrush welfare queens cannot live without public subsidies, then they should go out of business. Similarly, recreationists should pay to use our national lands. We should tax outdoor recreational equipment (skis, canoes, backpacks, etc.) and recreational vehicles (snowmobiles, jet skis, dirt bikes etc.). The money derived could be routed to pay for stewardship awards to private landowners and to the restoration of public lands.

How do we save the Endangered Species Act from the clashes that have poisoned its reputation and hampered its effectiveness? Through early engagement reforms, which will spare us from invoking the law's necessarily draconian measures. But make no mistake. The act is the last line of defense, and the fact remains that there will continue to be instances when nothing short of outright prohibitory regulation makes sense. Why? Because we will always be plagued by boneheads—self-indulgent individuals, groups and businesses that lack any sense of social responsibility. In Massachusetts, for example, the National Park Service and state authorities can't keep dune buggy riders off only a few beaches for a mere thirty-five days in the spring, when an endangered shore bird nests along the coast. On the other side of the country, California dirt bike racing organizations advocate allowing the last of the California condors—the world's largest bird capable of flight—to go extinct so that they can expand their racing domain. Sound reasonable? Of course not. That's why we need the Endangered Species Act.

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Americans Abroad

Whit Stillman's first film, *Metropolitan* (1990), was about upper-class Manhattan yuppies and their amorous tribulations, which were heightened at Christmas time. Brooks Brothers was the décor of look and of mind. The intricate, sometimes witty dialogue had one classic aspect: as in Restoration comedy, the articulate exchanges seemed an attempt at vitality on the part of people who were otherwise rather languid.

But the verbal fireworks were not enough, in this case, to rescue the whole from general languor. The chief interest of *Metropolitan* was in its territorial claim. Stillman was seizing a corner of the American film world for this social class, holding it against the middle-class or working-class or ghetto-class, racially mixed, gutter-spoken majority of new American pictures. Wryly enough, this was just the opposite of the situation early in this century when unrefined characters had to elbow their way into theater and film past the soigné well-to-do.

Stillman's second film, **Barcelona** (Castle Rock/Fine Line), makes *Metropolitan* look retrospectively like a warm-up. First, it is immediately apparent that his sheer cinematic fluency has taken a great leap forward. In the earlier film I frequently felt that Stillman had shot scenes with no prior vision of them. He just got them into the camera one way or another so that he could move on. Scene after scene in *Barcelona* is quite the reverse: the way that we see is relevant to what we're seeing. And scenes are often finished with a quick fade to black, which gives the film a smart, astringent tone.

But the great advance is in the film's embrace. It is about something more than the mere existence of its people. At first, there's only one small clue of depths ahead. In this respect Stillman's screenplay resembles David O. Russell's *Spanking the Monkey*: for a while, it seems to be about engaging but light matters, but they turn out to be only the necessary prelude to a deep plunge.

The time is "the last decade of the cold war." Stillman takes two young men of, figuratively, the *Metropolitan* set—played by two of the *Metropolitan* cast—and puts them in Barcelona. (A city that Stillman knows because his wife is Barcelonan.) One of the young men, Ted, is a sales rep for a Chicago firm. The other one, his cousin Fred, is a lieutenant j.g. in the Navy who arrives to do advance public relations for a visit of the Sixth Fleet. Fred barges in on Ted unannounced, takes the spare room in the apartment, soon moves into Ted's social life and soon borrows Ted's clothes so that he can get out of uniform when off-duty.

All this leads to some quite funny, quietly cantankerous dialogue between the two men, Ted irritated, Fred Teflon-coated, both dueling without anger. (Stillman's actors play it well, with *sforzandi* that quickly subside.) They join, however, in attention to attractive young Spanish women. Ted is also concerned with job security and with religion: he reads best-sellers on improving himself, and he reads the Bible concealed within a copy of *The Economist*. Both he and Fred sometimes discuss Large Questions, like the relation between beauty and true worth, which make them sound—quite deliberately—like Holden Caulfield a dozen years later.

Then the darkening comes. True, the very beginning of the film signals it: almost the first thing we see is the bombing of the American Library in Barcelona. But no one is hurt, and Ted and Fred never discuss it. Then anti-Americanism swells, both in Barcelona generally and specifically against Fred when he is in uniform. This puts the man-about-town behavior of the pair in a different light.

The local USO is bombed, and an American sailor is killed. Fred has to officiate at the dockside ceremony with the coffin (but Stillman keeps it from being maudlin by having it take place in a loading shed with Taps among the crates). For various mistaken reasons, a newspaper begins running stories about Fred as a CIA agent. The tentacles of the world tighten, and Fred is shot in a taxi by a man passing on a scooter.

Ted puts in a long, long vigil at Fred's hospital bedside. Ted has heard somewhere that the sound of a familiar voice helps a comatose patient to recover, so he reads *The Scarlet Pimpernel* aloud to the unconscious Fred. When he isn't reading, he kneels by Fred's bed and prays. A Spanish girlfriend, who hasn't figured much up to now, also comes to the room: she offers *War and Peace*—in English, of course.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

The Boys of St. Vincent. *Two sequential films about the abuse of boys in a Canadian Catholic orphanage. Based on fact. More about one friar's psychopathy than celibate stress, but gripping. (Reviewed 7/4/94)* **Four Weddings and a Funeral.** *A British breeze. Written by the author of "The Tall Guy" (with Emma Thompson), which is equally breezy and deserves revival. (4/4/94)* **Spanking the Monkey.** *David O. Russell's debut film insistently yet calmly investigates suburban sex, including (the right word) incest. The ending falters, but Russell's talent is clear. (8/1/94)* **François Truffaut: Stolen Portraits.** *A ninety-minute documentary. Interviews with Truffaut's family, friends, colleagues. Much affection, some insights. (8/8/94)* **—SK**

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Fred recovers. Mostly. This recovery doesn't seem false. It seems the truth of a romance, certainly bitter, certainly self-aware, but a romance. Any grimmer outcome to the shooting would have been as if a truck had slammed into one of the film locations in Barcelona and killed the cast: it would have nullified everything that had already been filmed. This view is amplified by the ending of the film in which almost everything is set to rights.

Nevertheless, Stillman's film functions as a warning—bright, sexy, funny, yet a warning. The best members of the social set that he knows are proceeding into the twenty-first century as if they could shape it like the twentieth, which was itself in some part a failure to repeat the nineteenth. Stillman hears his people asking: Why *can't* high spirits prevail? Why can't questions about Beauty and Worth still occupy young men's thoughts? Why can't spurts of religious schwarmerei sufficiently warrant faith? And, in some sort of nebulous analogy with all this, why can't the rest of the world see the benevolence of America's intentions, blunted though they often are by clumsy execution? These questions seem to underlie the film, and Stillman is shaking his head sadly.

Heading the cast is Barcelona itself, which Stillman presents gorgeously and without Gaudí. None of the three leading young women—Tushka Bergen, Mira Sorvino and Hellena Schmied—is in fact Spanish, but who's complaining? All are appealing and adequate: Bergen as a woman who entrances both cousins but who never quite leaves her original boyfriend, Sorvino as a moralist whose ideas on property are malleable, Schmied as the faithful Tolstoyan.

Taylor Nichols (Ted) and Chris Eigeman (Fred) play parts that were, says Stillman, written for them, and all three knew what they were doing. They give us Congreve or Vanbrugh characters of today. Tomorrow may be another matter.

The cinematography by John Thomas, who did *Metropolitan*, is teasingly lovely about Barcelona. Christopher Tellefsen, who too worked on *Metropolitan*, is the keen-eyed editor. I hope their presence, as well as others', means that Stillman is assembling a team for the long haul. Along with Hal Hartley and David O. Russell, he helps to cheer up American film prospects. •

Who is to blame for the cold war? A new quarrel.

The Revision Thing

BY JACOB HEILBRUNN

I.

Wars, like revolutions, are perennial occasions for historical revision. Consider the First World War. No sooner did it end than historians began attacking the belief that imperial Germany was a ruthless military power bent on global conquest. Decrying the American intervention in Europe, they argued that an economically exhausted Germany had been eager to sue for peace in 1916.

The cold war, too, has turned out to be ripe for second thoughts. Revisionists first attacked the orthodox view of the cold war in the 1960s, even as that war was taking place. Now that the United States has won, or thinks that it has won, a fresh corps of scholars has emerged to launch a revival of revisionism. The deluge of books and articles that they have produced since 1989 amounts to the advent of a new school of thought, which might be called neo-revisionism. The neo-revisionists repudiate all previous interpretations of the superpower conflict as cold war dinosaurs. Far from pinning the blame exclusively on either of the superpowers, they contend that the United States as well as the Soviet Union started and lost the cold war.

Beneath the studied neutrality, however, a moralizing impulse lingers. Intent on exposing the guilt of the American military-industrial complex, the new scholars draw a direct line of causation from the 1940s to the present. The deeper story of the cold war, they claim, is the story of how a crusading liberal internationalism deranged the delicate balance between liberty and power at home. Their story is an American one; and so they are largely indifferent to the recent revelations of Soviet and East European archives. Like the revisionists after the First World War who sought to purge the United States of corrupting foreign entanglements, so revisionism after the cold war is imbued with the fervent, at times despairing, wish to purify the nation of the sins committed by the fathers—the authors of the Marshall Plan, the Truman doctrine and the strategy of nuclear deterrence.

The neo-revisionists are not engaged in antiquarianism. They are writing with an eye on present-day foreign policy. The main lesson that they draw from the superpower conflict is that the United States should renounce the "murky radiance of dominion and power" (in John Quincy Adams's words) and embrace the ideal of a Jeffersonian republic that serves as a model for the world. The stakes are as much about the American future as the past.

The orthodoxy that offends the revisionists came in two varieties. There were cold warriors who opposed the Soviet Union as a messianic power, and cold warriors who opposed the Soviet Union as a traditional great power. Liberal "orthodox" historians contended, as Arthur Schlesinger Jr. put it, that the cold war was the "brave and essential response of free men to Communist aggression" and that American moves were defensive in nature. Realists such as Hans Morgenthau, George Kennan and Walter Lippmann agreed that Soviet aggrandizement was responsible for the cold war, but they did not think that communism was the culprit; instead they argued that Stalin was pursuing Russian national interests that dated back to the czars.

Led by William Appleman Williams, the so-called Wisconsin School battered away at the orthodoxy in the 1960s. Accusing American statesmen of following a consistent policy of economic imperialism, Williams and his students (such as Walter LaFeber) traced the original sin of American foreign policy back to the "Open Door Diplomacy" of the nineteenth century. They held that the cold war was the result of an insatiable American appetite for new markets, an urge that staved off pressure for a redistribution of goods domestically. "The history of the Open Door Notes," Williams lamented, "became the history of American foreign relations."

In his classic book, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (1959), Williams did not portray American leaders as evil. He argued that economic forces drove them to subvert their own ideals. The "tragedy" lay in Roosevelt's and Truman's attempts to kick open the door to Eastern Europe through the International

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Monetary Fund and the Export-Import bank. According to Williams, Stalin was frightened by the American effort to impose a liberal economic order on Eastern Europe. Stalin's own ambitions, by contrast, were far more modest. He wanted to secure friendly regimes on Russia's western borders, to restore his war-torn economy and to prevent the rise of a revanchist Germany.

Williams believed that both Roosevelt and Truman were to blame for cold war hostilities. Other revisionists, however, have tended to exonerate Roosevelt. In *The Cold War and Its Origins* (1961), D. F. Fleming argued that Roosevelt, had he lived to complete his fourth term, would have cooperated with Stalin. Fleming accused Truman of attempting to intimidate Stalin by curtailing Lend-Lease aid to the Soviet Union, and he also argued that Stalin had not broken his pledge to hold free and fair elections in Poland. In *Atomic Diplomacy* (1965), Gar Alperovitz expressed his admiration for Roosevelt's approach to Moscow and went on to argue that Truman dropped atomic bombs on Japan solely to terrify Stalin into making concessions in Eastern Europe. Before Truman began threatening Stalin, the Soviet leader had approved free elections in Hungary that were won by a non-Communist coalition. "Before he had been in office two weeks," lamented Alperovitz, Truman managed to destroy four years of Roosevelt's work with Stalin.

With the entanglement of the United States in Vietnam, the revisionist criticism acquired an even sharper edge. The star of the New Left school of revisionists was Gabriel Kolko. Unlike Williams, Kolko did not conclude that America's cold war imperialism was tragically flawed. Instead, he detected a calculated strategy of domination. In *The Politics of War* (1968), Kolko had Roosevelt pursuing an anti-Russian course in hopes of establishing American global economic dominance. Even the Morgenthau plan to destroy Germany's industrial base was, in truth, aimed at the Kremlin: it would deny the Russians some of the reparations they would desperately need after the war. The Vietnam War was not an isolated incident but the culmination of America's aggressive cold war policies.

By the 1970s, another current of thought appeared on the scene. Its aim was to revise the revisionists, not to refute them. Its most prominent member was John Lewis Gaddis, who expertly split the difference between the camps. His *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War*, which appeared in 1972, blamed both superpowers for the cold war; it became the Rosetta Stone for the post-revisionists. Recently Gaddis has further calibrated his view, placing greater blame on the Soviets; but as late as 1987 he could write that the orthodox school self-servingly "absolved the United States of responsibility for the breakdown of wartime cooperation; it made any future relaxation of tensions dependent upon changes of heart in Moscow, not Washington."

A Preponderance of Power
by Melvyn P. Leffler
(Stanford University Press, 711 pp., $55, $19.95 paper)

George F. Kennan and the Making of American Foreign Policy, 1947-1950
by Wilson D. Miscamble, C.S.C.
(Princeton University Press, 419 pp., $35, $16.95 paper)

The Devil We Knew: Americans and the Cold War
by H. W. Brands
(Oxford University Press, 243 pp., $25)

Losing Our Souls: The American Experience in the Cold War
by Edward Pessen
(Ivan R. Dee, 255 pp., $24.95)

We All Lost the Cold War
by Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein
(Princeton University Press, 542 pp., $35)

The Cold War: A History
by Martin Walker
(Henry Holt, 384 pp., $30)

Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War
by Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis and Xue Litai
(Stanford University Press, 432 pp., $45)

The Origins of the Cold War in Europe
edited by David Reynolds
(Yale University Press, 352 pp., $27.50)

The Sacred Cause: Civil-Military Conflict over Soviet National Security, 1917-1992
by Thomas M. Nichols
(Cornell University Press, 304 pp., $33.50)

Molotov Remembers: Inside Kremlin Politics
edited by Albert Reis
(Ivan R. Dee, 438 pp., $29.95)

With Melvyn P. Leffler's massive study of the origins of the cold war, the revisionist enterprise has found a fresh champion. Leffler, who teaches history at the University of Virginia, contends that the American conception of security was formulated in the early 1940s and emerged full-blown in 1946. American policymakers were intelligent, but they were not wise: had they only taken legitimate Soviet security concerns into account, the cold war would not have occurred. *A Preponderance of Power*, which won the Bancroft Prize, is the most influential study of the cold war to appear since the demise of the Soviet Union. Based on extensive research in American archives, it has become the sacred text of neo-revisionism.

II.

The first thing to be said about Leffler is that he himself does not set his book in the context of cold war historiography. He never alludes to any conflicting interpretations of the cold war. At most he files the standard revisionist disclaimer in his preface: "rather than dwell on Soviet aims and motives that remain unknowable, I have chosen to focus on the U.S. side of the cold war equation." (At least he admits to a choice.) And his agnosticism about the Soviet Union is not complete: as he nears his conclusion, he betrays a distinct unease about the Soviet role, and writes that American actions were "prudently conceived and skillfully implemented in cooperation with indigenous elites."

Like the earlier revisionists, Leffler stresses the importance of economics, but he turns the standard interpretation on its head. Leffler is a geopolitics man. In his view, economics does not drive geopolitics. Geopolitics drove economics. The Truman administration pursued a grand strategy of safeguarding American security by creating a favorable economic sphere for the United States. Far from fearing a Soviet military attack, American policymakers feared financial disorder, economic dislocation and political upheaval. They were worried that the Kremlin might exploit these weaknesses to alter the balance of power. The so-called wise men—George Marshall, Dean Acheson, James Forrestal, Robert Lovett, W. Averell Harriman and John McCloy—shared the Wilsonian dream of creating a liberal democratic order led by the United States, and they were determined to avoid a return to the unstable conditions of the 1930s. And so they harnessed the economic principles of the open door to the national security interests of the United States.

In advancing this thesis, Leffler denies Truman and his advisers any moral or humanitarian concerns in their effort to rebuild Europe. Their sole intention was to fend off a possible threat the Soviet Union might someday pose to the United States. Blending American self interest and ideology, they focused on aggressive Soviet actions and ignored friendlier ones. In a central passage, Leffler writes that

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> neither the Americans nor the Soviets sought to harm the other in 1945.... The protests that each country's actions evoked from the other fueled the cycle of distrust as neither could comprehend the fears of the other, perceiving its own actions as defensive. Herein rests the classic security dilemma.... In view of the overwhelming power of the United States and in view of the relative restraint exhibited by the Kremlin *outside its immediate periphery* [emphasis in original], U.S. officials might have displayed more tolerance for risk.... They chose to contain and deter the Russians rather than to reassure and placate them, thereby accentuating possibilities for a spiraling cycle of mistrust.

The "security dilemma" is one of Leffler's central concepts. At its heart is the old idea, developed in the controversy about the origins of the First World War, that arms races are not caused, but are themselves causes; that they have their origins in an "action-reaction" phenomenon; and that wars result accidentally from the very steps that nations take to avoid them, and to ensure their security.

Throughout his book, Leffler imports a "realist" model from international relations into history. This model ignores the domestic character of countries, thereby according legitimacy to any country's struggle for power. But such a view mistakes the cold war for another nineteenth-century-style balance of power struggle. And so Leffler skates over the fact that the American-led alliance differed drastically from the Soviet one. NATO, if it was an empire, was an empire by invitation. The Warsaw Pact was an empire by imposition. It was the Soviet Union, not the Soviet Union and the United States, that carved up Europe. In the West, "integration" into NATO became synonymous with prosperity, while in the East Stalin and his puppets had to blend nationalism and communism in order to hold the satellite countries together. The difference in results is apparent today.

But Leffler goes "realist" theory one step better. The crudity of his conception of power becomes apparent in his reading of the cold war as a battle over material interests. Despite Leffler's geopolitical orientation and his skepticism about economic causation, Williams still lives in his approach. Like Williams, Leffler maintains that the American need to control access to markets meant that its national security interests were global, while Stalin focused solely on securing Russia's western borders. It is true, obviously, that American policymakers did seek to expand the principles of free trade. What responsible policymaker would have argued for the economic exclusion of the United States from any region of the globe? But Leffler utterly fails to explain why the Western European nations, which were led by democratic socialists, feared the spread of communism. Clement Atlee, Ernest Bevin, Kurt Schumacher, Willy Brandt and Leon Blum were unlikely advance men for American capitalism and its "open door."

In fact, the Europeans were terrified that Washington would fail to respond to the Soviet threat. Bevin, the British foreign secretary, worried that Truman's policy was to "withdraw from Europe and in effect leave the British to get on with the Russians as best they could." Bevin mistrusted the Germans—"I tries 'ard, but I 'ates them"—as well as the Russians. The purpose of NATO, as Lord Ismay put it, was to keep the Russians out, the Germans down and the Americans in. Throughout the late '40s and early '50s the United States attempted to minimize its role in Europe. It was European economic weakness that forced the United States to step into the breach to defend a system of social democracy designed by the Europeans themselves. Far from wishing to establish an American sphere of influence in Europe, the United States attempted to create an independent Western Europe. Not until

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the failure of the European Defense Community in 1954 did the United States come down on the side of remaining permanently stationed on the continent.

Despite his claim that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union wanted to threaten each other, Leffler veers wildly between invoking "security dilemmas" and blaming American officials for the onset of the cold war. Leffler is an inconsistent realist: he holds the United States to lofty ideals and explains Soviet actions in terms of national security. Russian security interests, Leffler observes, meant that "they could not comply with U.S. conditions that they accept popular elections, self-determination, open trade and the free flow of capital in the countries on their immediate periphery." The sensible policy, Leffler believes, would have been to follow Henry Wallace's recommendations and to "accede to Soviet predominance on Russia's periphery and to stop hassling the Kremlin about it." Unfortunately, American officials "defined the Soviet Union as the enemy" and "latched onto an interpretation of international developments that placed blame and responsibility on the Kremlin."

In order to show that the United States "latched onto" a spurious threat, Leffler soft-pedals Soviet ideology. Leffler waves aside Stalin's own explanations of his international behavior. Take the notorious speech of February 9, 1946, in which Stalin laid down his marching orders for the postwar period. His audience sat frozen in fear as Stalin declared that a new war with capitalism was inevitable. At the time that Stalin delivered this speech, American troops were streaming back home, and Churchill had not yet delivered his Iron Curtain speech. Stalin was pursuing two aims in his address: he was combating what he perceived as the ideological contamination of the Soviet population that had lived under Nazi occupation, and he was reviving the confrontation with the West that legitimized the rule of the Communist Party. Yet Leffler confidently concludes that "neither Stalin's speech nor his actions were as threatening as some U.S. officials thought they were." Why not? Leffler never says.

When it comes to Truman, however, Leffler believes that ideas do matter. He deplores the fact that Truman's inaugural address in 1949 "was infused with the same ideological fervor that had permeated the Truman Doctrine address two years before." In retrospect, the striking thing about the Truman Doctrine is not its "ideological fervor" but its moral grounding: "one way of life ... is distinguished by free institutions.... The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed on the majority." Truman's address included the very humanitarian impulses that Leffler complains were "a minor influence on U.S. policy."

Leffler singles out Henry Wallace as the only high-ranking Truman official to resist the rush to demonize the Kremlin. We are told that Wallace's well-known speech of September 12, 1946, at Madison Square Garden "was a plea for reasonable compromise and a warning that toughness would beget toughness." Reasonable compromise? Wallace declared that the United States, not the Soviet Union, was practicing a foreign policy of "Machiavellian principles of deceit, force and distrust," and ranted that "British policy clearly is to provoke distrust between the United States and Russia and thus prepare the groundwork for World War III." Leffler also claims that the United States "abruptly suspended Lend-Lease deliveries to the Soviet Union" as part of a "defiant posture." This, too, is dubious. The United States curtailed shipments to all recipients of Lend-Lease aid, and had all along informed Soviet officials that the Lend-Lease act did not afford a legislative basis for continuing shipments after the war.

Leffler also downplays aggressive Soviet moves in the Middle East and Turkey. According to Leffler,

> if at the end of the cold war the Soviets were probing to enhance their position in the Middle East, which they were, then the Americans, too, were marking off areas of vital interest.... Each government was probably acting defensively, but the cumulative effect ... was to trigger a spiraling crisis of misperception and mistrust.

This is bizarre. There is no "probably" here. Khrushchev himself singled out Stalin's crude threats against Turkey as a huge Soviet blunder; and in his new memoirs, Molotov recounts in chilling detail that Stalin wanted to seize the Dardanelles, Libya and northern Iran, and even drew up plans for taking Alaska. It was Soviet aggrandizement in Iran, in fact, that first alarmed Truman about Soviet intentions.

It is a central contention of Leffler's book that the Truman administration deliberately inflated the Soviet threat in order to boost defense spending; and that this act precipitated a wasteful arms race. Exhibit A is the Clifford-Elsey report of 1946, which proposed a comprehensive American response to the Soviet danger. Leffler, who treats the report as a blueprint for American expansion around the globe, criticizes Clark Clifford and George Elsey for ignoring "formidable problems facing Soviet leaders." Incredibly, Leffler defines these problems to include "widespread executions and massive deportations of returning soldiers, repatriated prisoners and suspect minorities." These, Stalin's *problems*?

In the end, Leffler is unable to show that a "war scare" ever took place. What happened was that Truman declared to a nation still steeped in isolationist sentiments that it was imperative to resist Communist aggression by providing modest amounts of aid to Greece and Turkey and bailing out Europe economically. If Truman overstated his case, it was not because he was attempting to hoodwink the American public. Quite the contrary. He pushed his proposals precisely because he believed in them.

Like Stalin, the Truman administration had no overarching plan for the postwar period. That is why it is crucial to focus on personalities and the forces operating on them in order to understand how the postwar order developed. Dispensing with character sketches and social context, Leffler makes few attempts to assess the importance of the documents he has uncovered. His plodding tone may represent the scientific accuracy to which the historical profession aspires, but it takes the spirit out of history. You would never know from Leffler's account that Truman officials were working in an atmosphere of crisis and reaching split-second decisions. You would never know that a cold war was even taking place. His account of the Truman administration is outrageously tidy. It is, to borrow a phrase from Dean Acheson, clearer than the truth.

III.

American foreign policy from 1947 to 1950, as Wilson D. Miscamble shows in his exemplary book, was anything but the working out of a clearly defined strategy. The Truman administration not only faced a daunting array of foreign policy questions, but also a State Department racked by dissension and low morale. Miscamble, an Australian Jesuit teaching at Notre Dame, brings a refreshing objectivity to the study of Truman and his advisers. He demonstrates that the doctrine of containment was formed in a piecemeal and pragmatic fashion.

When George C. Marshall became secretary of state on January 21, 1947, the process of developing a policy to counter the Soviet threat was still in its infancy. Roosevelt had consistently ignored the hard-line advice coming from the State Department, and relied on cronies like Joseph E. Davies to conduc

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secret negotiations with the Kremlin. Alarmed at what he termed the "complete state of disorganization" of the State Department, Marshall delegated Dean Acheson to be his chief of staff and ordered George Kennan to form and run a policy planning staff.

The godfather of containment was James Forrestal, the secretary of war, but few figures epitomized the tensions between realism and ideology in the early days of the cold war more perfectly than Kennan. In 1946 his Long Telegram, an 8,000-word dispatch, sounded the alarm against Soviet aggression and had an electrifying effect in Washington. Kennan warned that the Kremlin had married traditional Russian expansionism to Marxism: "We have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with the U.S. there can be no modus vivendi."

In his memoirs Kennan recounted that twenty years later he read his cable over "with a horrified amusement," since it resembled "one of those primers put out by alarmed congressional committees or by the Daughters of the American Revolution, designed to arouse the citizenry to the dangers of the Communist conspiracy." But early Kennan had it right. In fact, he had underestimated the threat that the Soviet Union would pose to the United States when he calculated that the Soviet Union would implode within five to ten years, and that the health of Western societies alone would offer the greatest counter to the Soviet threat.

Kennan's interpretation of his own writings of the 1940s foreshadowed the rise of revisionism in the 1960s. One of his most important actions in the '40s, however, was to stress the need for psychological and guerrilla warfare against the Soviet Union. In October 1947 Kennan had written to Forrestal to propose the creation of a "guerrilla warfare corps" that would "fight fire with fire" behind the Iron Curtain. Kennan later claimed that he had been pulled reluctantly into the shadowy world of secret operations. But Miscamble, who stresses Kennan's bureaucratic wiliness, notes that Kennan proposed that the State Department policy planning staff oversee a "'directorate' for overt and covert political warfare." Kennan went on to argue that it was important for the United States to develop biological weapons because it had to be "*prepared* to use them if need be, for the mere fact of such preparedness may prove to be the only deterrent to Russian aggressive actions and in this sense the only sure guarantee of peace."

These apprehensions were not grounded solely in worries about economic dislocation. They were also exercised by military considerations. By 1947 Bevin believed it essential to construct a defensive military alliance in Western Europe; and in December of that year he proposed to Marshall an alliance that would guarantee Western European security and prevent further Soviet aggrandizement. It was this proposal that led directly to the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty and the establishment of NATO in 1949. As Bevin put it, only such an alliance would halt Soviet infiltration and the "piecemeal collapse of one Western bastion after another." The evidence of a Soviet military buildup increased steadily after 1945. By 1950 American intelligence estimates suggested that the Soviets possessed 175 divisions, several hundred bombers capable of flying missions against the British isles, 300 submarines and a substantial tactical air force. It is easy enough now to scoff at the apprehensions felt by Truman and Acheson, but the threat that the Kremlin posed was the threat of intimidation and the ability to strike decisively if a seizure of power was possible.

Indeed, it was Stalin's approval of North Korea's attack on South Korea in 1950 that finally provoked an American military buildup. The buildup was outlined in NSC-68, the 26,000-word paper that Forrestal's protégé Paul Nitze had composed in 1949 for Marshall's successor, Dean Acheson. NSC-68 called for an ideological crusade against communism and portrayed the Soviet Union as the leader of a monolithic "international Communist movement" challenging the "free world." Though the document exaggerated the cohesion of the Communist movement, it correctly diagnosed that the United States would have to increase its spending on the military, which had plummeted from $85 billion in 1945 to $10.5 billion in 1948.

Until North Korea attacked South Korea, however, Truman adamantly refused to endorse NSC-68 and to increase military outlays. Early in 1948 Truman had limited defense spending to $15 billion for 1950 and beyond, while NSC-68 called for spending $20 billion to $50 billion. Once the Korean war broke out, spending on the military shot up from 5 to 12 percent of GNP. Nuclear weapons in particular received heavy outlays. Given the rapid advances taking place in nuclear weapons technology and the role that NATO would play in securing Western Europe, it would have been reckless to maintain defense spending at its anemic postwar levels.

The interpretation of NSC-68 is crucial to the interpretation of the cold war. In order to portray NSC-68 as grossly exaggerating the Soviet threat, the revisionists flatly reject the notion that the Korean War was authorized by Stalin. After reviving the legend that Truman officials spurned opportunities to reach an accommodation with Mao, Leffler offers a favorite revisionist theme: "the idea that North Korea might be acting on its own volition to bring about a unification of the Korean people was beyond the grasp of U.S. officials.... The Korean conflict was a civil war. Notwithstanding Soviet military aid, the Kremlin did not create the conflict on the Korean peninsula." But this is a myth. In their definitive *Uncertain Partners*, Sergei N. Goncharov, John W. Lewis and Xue Litai show on the basis of patient archival research and interviews with Korean, Chinese and Russian participants that while Kim Il Sung proposed the war, "the invasion of June 25, 1950, was preplanned, blessed and directly assisted by Stalin and his generals, and reluctantly backed by Mao at Stalin's insistence."

Far from being a cautious statesman, Stalin took reckless gambles that almost plunged his country into world war. Indeed, Goncharov, Lewis and Litai report that the archives now reveal that Stalin launched, beginning in 1949, a massive arms buildup in the belief that a third world war was imminent. The Soviet leader viewed Korea as a springboard for an invasion of Japan and believed that Mao could promote revolutionary struggle in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, thereby forcing the United States to divert forces from Western Europe. Both Stalin and Mao were convinced that any weakness of an adversary should be exploited.

Yet Stalin remains the invisible man in the revisionist accounts. For Leffler to write that the purges in Eastern Europe were a "response" to the Truman doctrine and Marshall Plan demonstrates a stupefying ignorance of Stalin's personality and methods. Stalin's launching of the cold war had its origin not in economic fears of American expansion but in the need to restore his party's grip on his society. And Communist terror was rooted not only in Stalin's psyche but also in the militarized society created by Lenin. As far back as the Russian Civil War, the Bolsheviks had begun to eliminate entire social groups. This counter-revolution from above attempted to smash all local and regional identities in the hope of creating what Alexander Zionviev later called homo Sovieticus. The Soviet occupation of the Western Ukraine and Byelorussia from 1939-1941 provides an example of how

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the Soviet system foreshadowed the policies Stalin would pursue after World War II. The entire program of phony elections, purges and mass shootings was carried out during the invasion of Poland in 1939. A "class" approach was used to wipe out anybody who represented the "bourgeois order." Jan Gross has pointed out, in *Revolution from Abroad*, that where the Nazis controlled a population of 23 million people and murdered at least 120,000, the Soviet security police killed at least 400,000 people out of a population of 13 million and deported another 1.5 million to the Soviet interior.

Stalin may have varied his tactics, but his goal remained the same. Soviet foreign policy had its own ends, and those ends left scant opportunity for accommodation. In June 1946 Maxim Litvinov, who had already warned American ambassador W. Averell Harriman that the United States could do "nothing" to satisfy Stalin, secretly (and bravely) told an American correspondent that if the West granted all of Moscow's demands, "it would lead to the West being faced, after a more or less short time, with the next series of demands." The root cause of tensions, he explained, was the "ideological conception prevailing here that conflict between the Communist and capitalist worlds is inevitable." Roosevelt's complacency led Stalin to believe that the West would never respond to Soviet aggrandizement. And so he overplayed his hand. In the end, it was Stalin's own ham-handed pressure on Berlin and other pressure points that fulfilled his nightmare of an anti-Soviet Western alliance. As Molotov put it, "they only woke up when we took half of Europe from them."

In an outstanding collection of essays called *The Origins of the Cold War in Europe*, two young Russian scholars, Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, point out that Stalin's cold war imposed on his successors "a whole range of commitments, both imperial and ideological." Their archival research indicates that Stalin's reaction to the Marshall Plan was not a panicky backlash, as Leffler would have it, but a calculated decision made in the belief that the correlation of forces favored the Soviet Union. The Kremlin was acting simultaneously in a number of roles. It was a "normal" state playing international politics, the center of a revolutionary international party and an occupying power administering vast new territories. Stalin was convinced that an economic crisis in the West, coupled with the popularity of the Soviet Union throughout Europe, would permit him to take over all of Germany, France and Italy. Had Stalin been a normal leader pursuing his national interests, he would at most have Finlandized Eastern Europe instead of imposing a totalitarian order.

IV.

The evidence unearthed by Russian researchers is (or should be) deafening. And yet the zeal to put the United States in the dock continues unabated. H.W. Brands explains that the cold war was largely a product of an unstable American psyche. Like Leffler, he shuns any consideration of Soviet motives: "Why the Soviets did what they did, and what got into the British, French, Chinese, Koreans, Vietnamese, Cubans and the rest is for someone else to say." When the Soviet Union did invade countries, it was merely playing into the hands of American officials by providing a convenient villain.

Similarly, Edward Pessen blames the military, the CIA and the FBI for conducting the real cold war against the American people. Drawing a distinction between Nazism and Marxism-Leninism, Pessen writes that the latter was

> not quite the repulsive philosophy described to the American people by American leaders. It could command the devotion as well as admiration of tens of millions of people in Western Europe because of its humane and egalitarian and cultural vision.

Brands and Pessen could have made a sustained case for re-examining the manner in which the United States conducted the cold war. There *is* plenty to expose. The radiation experiments, the degradation of the environment, the wasteful manner in which Reagan's military buildup was often conducted—these are all necessary subjects for historical research and critical thought. But none of these historians argues for such a program. Instead they issue exquisitely calibrated denunciations of American policy and portray themselves as martyrs for the truth. Typical of their piety and self-congratulation is Pessen's declaration that the "scholar's task is not to please the state by approval of its every act but rather to serve the community by calling its attention to and condemning governmental behavior.... I have written a book that the evidence of the past forty-seven years demanded be written."

The supreme irony of the revisionist lament is that the cold war, far from distorting the domestic economy, was often a boon to progressive goals. In many

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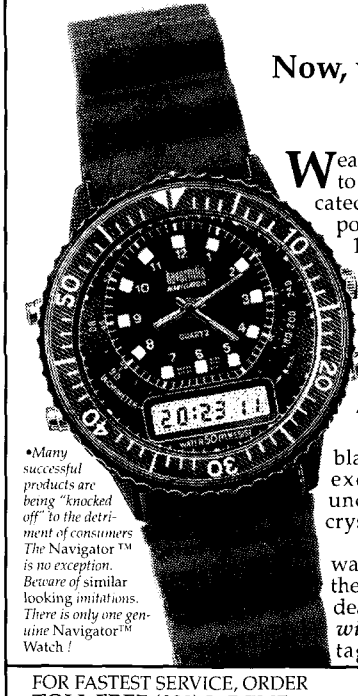

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areas of American life, from education to aeronautics, the cold war forced the federal government to make massive investments. Fighting the cold war pressured elites to improve working conditions and social welfare and made it impossible for Republicans to roll back the New Deal. In fact, it was Democratic politicians and Keynesian economists who assailed Eisenhower for his opposition to public investment in military projects. In 1958 the Yale economist James Tobin denounced Eisenhower for a "solicitude for the budget that has weakened us in conventional arms [and] has enabled the Soviet Union to catch and surpass us in the realm of nuclear weapons and rockets." Sputnik, Tobin declared, "will be well worth the blow it has dealt our national pride if it frees national policy from the shackles of fiscal orthodoxy." Had the cold war never existed, the United States would not have spent more money on social programs; it would have spent less.

And yet it is the major theme of the new revisionism that both great powers started the cold war, and both must therefore have lost it. Though much of the revision focuses on the origins of the cold war, there is a burgeoning debate also about its end. Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein depict the cold war as "a contest between insecure and domestically pressured leaders acting on divergent perceptions of national interest." Lebow and Stein examine the Cuban missile crisis and the Arab-Israeli war of 1973 to contend that deterrence prolonged, rather than shortened, the cold war. They conclude by arguing that far from hastening Gorbachev's decision to reach an accommodation with the West, the Reagan arms buildup impeded it. Their ultimate aim is to deny the United States, and above all the Reagan administration, a victory in the struggle between the superpowers.

Treating the Soviet Union and United States as "variables," Lebow and Stein ascribe legitimacy to both regimes. Their work demonstrates how the value-neutral methodology of social science is incapable of acknowledging, and accounting for, the different character of the Soviet and American systems. In their view, the superpower conflict obscured the fact that the superpowers were fundamentally alike: "two apes on a treadmill," in Paul Warnke's phrase. Warnke was referring only to the arms race; but his characterization became a popular metaphor for the cold war itself, which was often reduced to a competition in military technology.

Like Leffler, Lebow and Stein resort to "the security dilemma" to explain the cold war. They draw a direct analogy between the American and Soviet spheres in Western Europe: "the superpowers, guided by incompatible visions of security, sought to incorporate as much of Europe as possible in their respective spheres of influence...." In their view, both superpowers began arming with conventional and nuclear weapons in response to the fear that the cold war generated on both sides. And deterrence ended up becoming a source of conflict in its own right. The sorest weakness of Lebow and Stein's analysis is that they define deterrence so broadly that it comes to include Soviet efforts to overtake the United States in the arms race. But the Soviet advance in ballistic missile technology in the '70s and '80s was not deterrence; it was a quest for superiority.

Rehearsing one of the banalities of the arms-control movement, Lebow and Stein wave aside politics. But the strategic balance really does affect the foreign policies pursued by nations. Arms were not the cause of the cold war, they were the expression of it. The Kremlin did not recoil from raw power politics at the international level, or behave like the rational utilitarians of the game theories beloved of social scientists. We now know from East German military archives that the Warsaw Pact intended to employ tactical nuclear weapons at the outset of any battle with NATO. No gradual escalation, of the kind envisioned by American planners, was to take place. These archives indicate that Warsaw Pact forces were planning and exercising for a conquest of West Germany and other NATO countries in Europe. Thousands of medals were stored away for future victory celebrations. All of this may have been fantasy, but fantasy is an important part of reality, and this was the world of fantasy in which the Communist leaders lived.

What is more, we now know the overall Soviet atomic arsenal reached a high point of 45,000 warheads—12,000 more than the United States estimated. Indeed, the Soviet military itself was the biggest obstacle to perestroika. The military was an essential organ of the state originally constructed by Lenin during the Russian civil war. In his illuminating book, Thomas Nichols astutely notes that "the result of the conflict between political indoctrination and military professionalism has been that the Soviet Armed Forces are *'military' in organization but Marxist in orientation* [emphasis in original]." Soaked through with Marxist-Leninist ideology, the military clashed with a Communist Party that began to adopt a more pragmatic stance toward international politics. Nichols concludes that the leaders of the post-Soviet republics have inherited military organizations that continue to resist the abandonment of their ideological foundations. The implications for the present are obvious.

The conflict between the Party and the military that simmered after Stalin's death erupted in the 1980s. For the Soviet Union did not fundamentally alter its foreign policy aims until it altered its ideology. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze rejected Brezhnev's thesis that peaceful coexistence was simply a new form of the class struggle. The "new thinking" had its sources in notions of the interdependence of nations and the primacy of "all-human" values over class conflict. The existence of nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence made it possible for Gorbachev to revise traditional Soviet definitions of defense since the ultimate weapon obliterated many geographical considerations. The contortions that Gorbachev and company had to go through to justify their junking of old ideological tenets demonstrates the extent to which ideology permeated Soviet foreign policy. Gorbachev had teams of intellectuals poring through Leninist works to justify his deviations from orthodoxy. The result was that national security was no longer equated with the amount of territory that the Soviet Union occupied. This was a fundamental revision, and it permitted Gorbachev to relinquish the Soviet hold on Eastern Europe.

There is room for disagreement, of course, about the effect of the Reagan defense buildup on the Soviet Union. Lebow and Stein contend that it is "likely" that the buildup delayed Soviet reforms. (They imply that Brezhnev would have been Gorbachev had the United States only restrained itself.) There is no way to prove such an assertion. But its opposite seems more plausible: that, in the absence of an American response to the Soviet accumulation of new weapons, Gorbachev would have had a more difficult time persuading the military and the KGB to endorse glasnost and perestroika. The burden of proof rests, in any event, with Lebow and Stein to demonstrate that this was not the case.

A series of embarrassing military defeats played a crucial role in sapping Soviet morale. Apart from Afghanistan, one of the most overlooked and lethal blows to the Soviet Union was inflicted in the Middle East. In the war in Lebanon in 1982, the Israelis, using American F-15 and F-16 fighters, destroyed Soviet MiG-21 and MiG-23 aircraft, T-72 tanks and surface-to-air-missiles while suffering almost no

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losses. Soviet confidence and Soviet prestige plummeted.

Many of the greatest challenges to Soviet stability, however, came from within. In his lively narrative history of the cold war, Martin Walker shrewdly shows that the rise in oil prices in the '70s allowed Brezhnev to ignore the new global technical revolution. The results were perilous. Unfortunately, Walker, a correspondent for the *Guardian*, falls into the same trap as the neo-revisionists. He assumes that the cold war was inexorably driven by economic forces and that both superpowers were "superlosers." But the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1989 was not inevitable. And economic forces were not always paramount. Military power and the moral crusade waged by the United States were decisive factors. Economics alone does not explain why a ruling elite loses its nerve and prepares for its own extinction.

It was Soviet ideology that was a crucial factor in the Soviet system's demise. From its birth, the USSR embodied the spirit of technical progress. By the 1980s, however, pervasive immiseration had dealt a blow to the nation's self-confidence. The gap between reality and an inflexible worldview became too great to ignore. As Alexander Yakovlev, an architect of perestroika, recently recounted,

> the main thing that changed my worldview, my ideology, was the fact that ideology was my business. I have to tell you I took the work seriously. And gradually, step by step, more and more often, it nauseated me.... It turns out that everything here is mixed up with power, hypocrisy and lies, at least at the top level.

It is unfortunate, odd, but not altogether surprising that American revisionists have proved more attached to their orthodoxies than Soviet historians and politicians. But history is not on the side of revisionism. The record will be corrected more and more by discoveries made in the rubble of the state that really did lose the cold war. And revisionism, too, will come to be seen as the relic of an old ideological struggle. The further the cold war recedes into the past, the faster revisionism itself will be revised by a historiographical revolution from abroad. •

Typeface and Redskin

BY VERNON SHETLEY

Complete Poems, 1904-1962 by E. E. Cummings

(Liveright, 1,102 pp., $50)

The Enormous Room by E. E. Cummings

(Liveright, 275 pp., $11.95)

E. E. Cummings is that rarest of rare things, a genuinely popular poet. This carefully edited, handsomely produced complete edition, celebrating the centenary of Cummings's birth, appears a mere twelve years after a previous *Complete Poems*, and joins "typescript editions" of five of Cummings's individual volumes already in print. This rigorous publishing activity is almost entirely "market-driven." It operates outside the command economy of the university, where teachers are told to publish and students are told what to read. Though many of the readers of this new edition of the poems will likely be young, will be assigned reading for few of them. Of course, many poets of Cummings's generation have readerships outside the academy. Pound, Frost and Eliot are read by many who may have first encountered them in the classroom but who have remained readers of their work after the final exams have been taken. Those poets, however, are the focus of substantial academic industries, their reputations nursed by professionals with vested interests. Cummings, as he might have desired it, has no academic constituency.

Perhaps the poet who most closely shares this situation of academic disrepute and popular interest is Edna St. Vincent Millay, his near contemporary, who has if anything even less prestige within the university, but whose books, like Cummings's, remain in print without being on anyone's required reading list. Cummings and Millay might seem at first to have nothing in common; Cummings is often thought of as a prototypically modernist poet, an experimentalist who sought to remake poetic form, while Millay's conservative, technically faultless use of traditional forms was part of her signature style. Yet the curious situation they share, of popularity without academic respect, points to some underlying similarities.

For all his experimentalism, Cummings was something of a songbird himself. Dante Gabriel Rossetti was a powerful influence on his early work, and the attitudes Cummings imbibed from Rossetti's verse stayed with him long after he had expunged "thee," "thou" and "thy" from his vocabulary. Like that of Millay's, the tone of Cummings's poetry alternates between sentimentality and a kind of smart cynicism. In both, an appearance of tough talk and daring, particularly in sexual matters, obscures a core of romanticism. And both imagined themselves as social rebels, a bohemian nonconformist in Cummings's case, a "New Woman" in Millay's. Dorothy Parker remarked about Millay that she "made poetry seem so easy that we could all do it. But of course, we couldn't." Cummings similarly seems to make lyric modernism available on easy terms to any poetic aspirant. His repertoire of linguistic and typographical tricks is easily imitated, while the simplicity of its content makes his work seem an approachable model. Though the chief influences on bad undergraduate poetry have shifted a bit (Sharon Olds seems to be the favorite where I teach), anyone who has ever taught a poetry writing course has probably had a moment or two of wishing that Cummings's poems could be expunged from the planet.

Cummings's popularity has held pretty much steady since the 1950s, when he came to be honored, after something of an eclipse in the '30s and '40s, as a survival from the world of Greenwich Village bohemianism and an avant-garde original. While hardly so shrewd a manipulator of his public image as Frost, he became a compelling reader of his own work, and the largely autobiographical Norton Lectures that he delivered at Harvard in 1952-53, later collected in *i: six nonlectures*, were by all accounts an enormous success. The '30s had been hard on Cummings. *No Thanks*, his volume of poems that appeared in 1935, was dedicated to the fourteen publishers who turned it down, and the political imperatives that reigned in the liter-

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ary world left little room for an essentially lyric temperament. Cummings had made the further mistake of expressing his disenchantment with the Soviet Union after a trip in 1931. No doubt the politically suspicious critics of our own moment would see something sinister in the timing of Cummings's revival, coming as it did in the middle of the cold war; but a nostalgia for the heroic days of early modernism in art, and the admiration felt in a conformist time for a poet of cantankerous individuality, are more likely explanations.

Cummings was part of a brilliant group at Harvard that included the novelist John Dos Passos and Scofield Thayer, who went on to edit *The Dial*, one of America's leading little magazines of the '20s. He first came to the attention of the broad reading public with the publication of *The Enormous Room*, a memoir of his imprisonment in France during the First World War. The story has a certain comic absurdity. Pacifist by inclination, Cummings had volunteered for the ambulance service in a pre-emptive strike against conscription. He had seen no action in his three months of duty when some letters written by William Slater Brown, his only friend in the outfit, fell afoul of the French censors, largely, it seems, because of remarks on the low morale of the French troops. In one of those outbreaks of stupidity common enough in wartime, Cummings and Brown (whom he refers to throughout the book as "B") were arrested and sent to a Dépôt de Triage in La Ferté-Macé. Not exactly a prison, the Dépôt held persons suspected, for whatever reason, of subverting the war effort. Most of the men seem to have been guilty of little more than being foreigners in a country swept by a hysterical nationalism, while the women were largely prostitutes who had been plying their trade in the war zone. Cummings passed an uneventful, if undernourished, three months there, before State Department pressure, urged on by Cummings's outraged and ever-energetic father, succeeded in springing him.

The Enormous Room is certainly Cummings's best book. It manifests a happy fit between author and material, and at the same time it demonstrates clearly Cummings's strengths and weaknesses as a writer. Cummings had no gift for large-scale organization or analytic thought; telling his story required neither. The events leading from his arrest to his arrival in the internment center (the enormous room of the title) are narrated chronologically. One day in prison being pretty much like any other, most of the book is devoted to portraits of various characters he encountered during his confinement and to descriptions of the prison and its routine. Cummings toys with a series of parallels to *Pilgrim's Progress*, in the manner of *Ulysses*: the ambulance corps is the Slough of Despond, the Director of the Dépôt is Apollyon. But the structural parallels, sketchily carried through, are much less significant than Cummings's participation in a fundamentally allegorical tradition in which inner character is delineated through outward appearance, as in this portrait of the official who welcomes him to La Ferté-Macé:

> He had bushy semi-circular eyebrows which drooped so much as to reduce his eyes to mere blinking slits. His cheeks were so furrowed that they leaned inward. He had no nose,properly speaking,but a large beak of preposterous widthlessness,which gave his whole face the expression of falling gravely downstairs,and quite obliterated the unimportant chin.... His neck was exactly like a hen's:I felt sure that when he drank he must tilt his head back as hens do in order that the liquid may run down their throats. But his method of keeping himself upright,together with certain spasmodic contractions of his fingers and the nervous "uh-ah,uh-ah" which punctuated his insecure phrases like uncertain commas,combined to offer the suggestion of a rooster;a rather moth-eaten rooster, which took itself extremely seriously and was showing-off to an imaginary group of admiring hens situated somewhere in the background of his consciousness.

DRAWING BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The book is filled with marvelous caricatures of this sort, some satiric, others sympathetic, all of which show off Cummings's knack for vivid, oddly angled metaphors, and his talent for compact and evocative description.

Though he was far removed from the military action, Cummings's experience of the war was in some way emblematic, composed as it was of bureaucratic stupidity, the petty tyranny of small officials and huge amounts of boredom. If nothing else, this made him some kind of representative of the experience of mass war, or of modern life more generally. Cummings's favorite self-image was as a kind of Chaplinesque naif responding with the heart rather than the head, and the situation of his imprisonment meshed well with the passivity, the sense of aggrieved innocence, inherent in such a role. The romantic primitivism that characterizes Cummings's stance as an observer is well-suited to telling the tales of bewildering and sometimes absurd misfortune that make up the stories of his fellow detainees.

At the core of the book is a series of lengthy portraits of four inmates whom Cummings refers to as "The Delectable Mountains," in his *Pilgrim's Progress* terminology. Jean Le Nègre is an embodiment of rough, animal vigor; Surplice,

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holy fool; the Wanderer, a paragon of sweetness and passivity; and The Zulu, who is the object of the author's envy, a living instance of a great romantic myth, the natural man, who communicates directly, without the obstructing medium of language. The Zulu's attainments in English were confined, Cummings reports, to "the single word 'polees-man,' " and yet

> I have never in my life so perfectly understood (even to the most exquisite nuances) whatever idea another human being desired at any moment to communicate to me,as I have in the case of The Zulu. And if I had one-third the command over the written word that he had over the unwritten and the unspoken—not merely that;over the unspeakable and the unwritable—God knows this history would rank with the deep art of all time.

Each of these figures is some version of a noble savage, a gentle, luckless soul whose incarceration exposes the restless malice of "le gouvernement français," and in this they resemble the writer himself.

Cummings's sympathy with the innocents who make up his companions at La Ferté-Macé is the most attractive element of *The Enormous Room.* At the same time those parts of the book that touch on politics reveal the weakness of Cummings's absolute reliance on "purely personal Feeling" as a criterion of judgment. It is the French who have imprisoned the harmless unfortunates of La Ferté-Macé, and so the French are bad; and if the French are bad, then their enemies, the Germans, must be fine folks. And so Cummings recounts, without skepticism, a fellow inmate's praise of the German invaders: "no one could have been more considerate or just than the commander of the invading troops." After describing the particularly savage and unjust treatment meted out to one female inmate, Cummings remarks:

> I realized fully and irrevocably and perhaps for the first time the meaning of civilization. And I realized that it was true—as I had previously only suspected it to be true—that in finding us unworthy of helping to carry forward the banner of progress,alias the tricolour,the inimitable and excellent French government was conferring upon B and myself—albeit with other intent—the ultimate compliment.

Of course prison guards and prison wardens are a nasty concomitant of "civilization," but Cummings's sarcastic indictment surely overshoots the mark. The romantic primitivism that informs his outpourings of sympathy for his fellow inmates fails badly when applied to the world outside the prison walls.

Cummings's virtues and vices are mirror images of one another, and it may well be that the vices have as much to do with the following that his poetry has gathered as the virtues. The ratio between the two remained surprisingly constant throughout his career. Once Cummings had rubbed off the pre-Raphaelite gloss of his earliest poems and invented the typographically hyperactive style that became his signature, it is hard to discover any development within his work, and most of the items in this huge *Complete Poems* could be shuffled together without the reader's suspecting that the work spanned four decades.

Though Cummings wrote less in his later years, his poetry never lost the freshness and the immediacy of response that characterizes his early work, nor did it grow appreciably in depth, technique or wisdom. From first to last, Cummings appears as the spontaneous celebrant of love and natural beauty, or as the satiric scourge of the hypocritical and materialist many, the enemy of science ("progress is a comfortable disease"), commerce ("a salesman is an it that stinks Excuse") and government ("a politician is an arse upon / which everyone has sat except a man"). Cummings's reputation as an experimentalist obscures the fundamentally conventional attitudes at the bottom of his work. Indeed, the typographic oddities have the function, ultimately, of obscuring the old-fashioned content behind an avant-garde surface, and it is this combination of the sentimental and the up-to-date that accounts for much of the continuing attraction Cummings has for readers of a certain age.

All of Cummings is there, and not merely in embryo, in his first book of poetry, *Tulips & Chimneys,* which was published in 1923. The title itself marks the conjunction of lyric primitivism and urban irony. Much of the early work in the "Tulips" section is absurdly overwrought, the sort of straining for effect that Byron was describing when he complained that Keats was always "frigging his imagination." The poems continually stall at contrived paradoxes ("brutal dew," "rare unease"); gushing exclamations ("O visible beatitude sweet sweet / intolerable!silence immaculate / of god's evasive audible great rose!"); and an overload of adjectives ("the vivid magical / impetuous and utter ponds / of dream"). At times all this can add up to something endearing. The "Epithalamion" that Cummings wrote for Thayer's marriage trembles on the brink of self-parody, but it is hard not to be won over, if only because the poem reminds us of that epoch in our own lives when we were willing to risk being ridiculous in our enthusiasm for the beautiful:

> And still the mad magnificent herald
> Spring
> assembles beauty from forgetfulness
> with the wild trump of April:witchery
> of sound and odour drives the wingless
> thing
> man forth into bright air,for now the red
> leaps in the maple's cheek,and suddenly
> by shining hordes in sweet unserious dress
> ascends the golden crocus from the dead.

Preposterously affected this surely is; but it may also remind us of Auden's remark that "affectation, passionately adopted and loyally persevered in, is one of the chief means by which mankind raises itself by its bootstraps."

One might prefer it, in fact, to the mature work, whose maturity is confined entirely to matters of rhetoric and technique. Here is a typical passage of celebratory lyric from *95 Poems,* which appeared more than three decades after *Tulips & Chimneys*:

> being to timelessness as it's to time,
> love did no more begin than love will end;
> where nothing is to breathe to stroll to
> swim
> love is the air the ocean and the land
>
> (do lovers suffer?all divinities
> proudly descending put on deathful flesh:
> are lovers glad?only their smallest joy's
> a universe emerging from a wish)

The later poem is polished and assured where the earlier one is undisciplined and erratic, but the later passage marks no advance whatever in terms of the richness and the depth of the attitudes it communicates. Spring is beautiful, and

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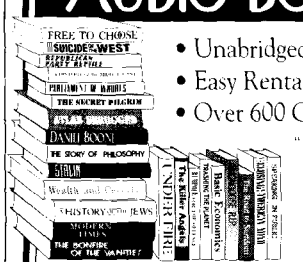

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love is good, and that is all that Cummings ever found to say on these matters. Cummings's early work comes by its naïveté honestly, while the later poems, in their willful insulation from the complications of experience, seem contrived for just that reason.

The grotesques collected in "Chimneys," and the vein of satire in Cummings's work to which they belong, are rather less winning than the lyric effusions that their irony is meant to balance. The poet consorts with criminals and prostitutes, and pronounces them fine folk, much to be preferred to the bourgeois stuffed shirts. He celebrates his own sexual freedom with a posturing bravado, like those people whose determination to be nonconformists makes them walk on the grass whenever a sign says not to:

> my girl's tall with hard long eyes
> as she stands,with her long hard hands
> keeping
> silence on her dress,good for sleeping
> is her long hard body filled with surprise
> like a white shocking wire,when she smiles
> a hard long smile it sometimes makes
> gaily go clean through me tickling aches,
> and the weak noise of her eyes easily files
> my impatience to an edge....

The coarse swagger is the necessary converse of the lyric ecstasy. Both paint the poet as the hearty, natural man, quick to respond with joy to natural beauty or with ridicule to the hypocrisies of civilization. Cummings's satires contain many of his best verbal inventions, but the poet's certitude that he himself embodies the natural standard by which all things may be measured leaves him prey to some damaging prejudices. The homophobia of the well-known satire on Auden and Spender, "flotsam and jetsam / are gentlemen poeds," antedates the coining of that term, but no such excuse can be made for the anti-Semitic squib, "a kike is the most dangerous / machine as yet invented." His refusal to heed his friends, who pleaded with him to omit this poem from the 1950 collection *XAIPE*, only shows again that moral stupidity is sometimes the price for refusing any guide but personal feeling.

While Randall Jarrell may have been a bit harsh to refer to a "moral vacuum at the heart of E. E. Cummings's poetry," the attitudes that Cummings expresses, even at his best, are largely those of adolescence. Poet and reader form a mutual admiration society, congratulating themselves on their finer sensitivity. As Cummings puts it in the introduction to his *Collected Poems* of 1938, "The poems to come are for you and me and are not for mostpeople—it's no use trying to pretend that mostpeople and ourselves are alike. Mostpeople have less in common with ourselves than the square-rootofminusone. You and I are human beings; mostpeople are snobs." Cummings holds out to the reader the promise that one never has to grow old, a promise that is particularly attractive to people who are just on the brink of putting aside childish things and facing adult responsibilities. Cummings tells you that it's the world's fault, not yours; that you shouldn't have to change, the world should; that you are, in fact, too good for the world. This is something that most of us want to believe at a certain time in life, but few of us are able to ignore the evidence to the contrary, as Cummings did, much past our early 20s.

Is Cummings, then, a bad influence? Perhaps not nearly so much as my account might suggest. Most readers, and most poets, are likely to outgrow Cummings's work at some point, without permanent harm to their sensibilities, and if his experimentalism is hardly as radical as it first appears, it has its value nonetheless. The typographical fancies that most readers associate with Cummings's name are largely gimmicks, one-shot tricks that don't repay rereading. But Cummings applies many kinds of torsions to language, and the sense of linguistic play and freedom one finds in his best work is the more welcome the more our own language becomes sclerotic with bureaucratese or debased by the novelties of advertising:

> the cunning the craven
> (as think as can feel)
> they when and they how
> and they live for until
> though the sun in his heaven
> says Now

The sentiment in this stanza won't bear much scrutiny, but turning "when" and "how" into verbs is a real invention, vividly compressing into a satiric ventriloquism a point that might have taken a good deal of space. Whatever one thinks of the particular results he achieved, the willful freedom with which Cummings coins new words or forces existing ones into unaccustomed roles reminds readers of the malleability of language and reawakens our perceptions of language's potential.

And the literary landscape of the present moment perhaps gives us one further reason to enjoy Cummings. He is certainly not a major poet; his work is almost devoid of ideas, and the few that appear make one feel that less is more. But the pleasures that the poetry offers are real, and in a literary world increasingly characterized by hostility to pleasure, reading Cummings has some of the character of a stolen or furtive joy. In the Communist countries of Eastern Europe, pure poetry became political and subversive, as the very refusal to enlist one's art in the service of the state was a form of political resistance. Now that political and ideological considerations dominate the evaluation and the interpretation of literature throughout our culture, reading a poet like Cummings who has no program and who makes no pretense to improve you, seems in itself like an act of rebellion. A bit like "Ola" in his well-known poem, reading Cummings makes one feel like a conscientious objector in the culture wars.

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Nephelogic

A couple of small clouds, high-
up and about-of-a-size
with the rind of an old moon
rising by day... Just these
afloat in a ribbon of noon
at the top of the window—two
companion puffs as white
and silent as two ships' salutes
in an old engraving—save
that insensibly, left to right,
they are moving out of the picture...

It is pretty without them
of course, that unfathomable blue,
but less so—as a Ruisdael
or a Turner will testify.—

And of less interest, too,
you could say, mindful of those
new savants at Alamos
who defy classical stricture,
seeking an Absolute-
beyond-absolutes,
a "Laws-of-Chaos",
among their fractals and an-
alog *edges* of things; ie.:
here, a certain cloud; and *here*,
next to it, empty air...
What exactly, goes on there?

Or whatever does, what then
limits it, gives the closure,
so that we say clouds *form*?

For that matter... But enough.
Two clouds don't make a storm.
Let us keep our composure.

PETER KANE DUFAULT

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O Calcutta!

By Anita Desai

Bengal Nights
by Mircea Eliade
translated by Catherine Spencer

(University of Chicago Press, 176 pp., $22.50)

It Does Not Die: A Romance
by Maitreyi Devi

(University of Chicago Press, 264 pp., $22.50)

In 1950 Mircea Eliade, the scholar of religion and philosopher of culture, published a thinly disguised account of a romantic episode in his youth in Calcutta, where he lived with a Bengali family and fell in love with their daughter, Maitreyi. Eliade's novel is a disturbing mixture of the racial and colonial attitudes of the day and a lush romanticism: Maitreyi naked on a bed is described as "a bronze statue," there are many incidents of her tossing him sprigs of jasmine and performing mysterious betrothal rites, and so on. The time was 1930 and India was a British colony, its affairs run by white colonials and Anglo-Indians.

Eliade—or Alain, as he calls himself in the novel—is obsessed by racial differences, and takes pains to record the subtlest shades of skin color. When he first sees Maitreyi (he is an engineer working in India), he notes not only that he thought her "ugly, with eyes too large and black, thick and curling lips and the powerful chest of a Bengali maiden who has developed too quickly," but also that her skin was "a shade I had never seen before, matte brown, an alloy of clay and wax." And the prejudice does not stop at the skin: invited to visit her home, he is taken aback to find it "civilized" in the Western sense. "I would never have imagined," he writes, "the interior of a Bengali house could contain so many marvels." His host, Mr. Sen, makes him wonder "how a man could be so ugly, could lack expression so completely," but he is charmed by the little sister, Chabu. Her "bare calves and arms and swarthy, sweet face reminded me of our European gypsies," which, presumably, made her acceptable.

Glancing out a window, the European hero catches a glimpse of Maitreyi almost naked ... lying stretched out across two steps." (A Bengali girl of a middle-class family "almost naked" in the open?) His initial revulsion turns to fascination: "Maitreyi's naked arm and the strange quality of that somber brown, so disturbing and unfeminine it was the flesh of a goddess or a painted image rather than a human." He confesses his fascination to his friend Harold, an Anglo-Indian clerk at the Army & Navy Stores, and Harold expostulates: "Really, Alain, how can you fall for a Bengali? They're disgusting. I was born here, I know these women better than you do. They're dirty—and there's nothing doing, you know." And the racist feelings that the novel describes were by no means confined to one camp. Alain discovers that the Anglo-Indians who work on the same project as he "could insult the workers in perfect Hindustani. Their mastery of the language and their rich vocabulary lowered them in the eyes of their subordinates. I, on the contrary, spoke badly, with a deplorable accent—my superiority was therefore indisputable."

If anyone still doubts the extent to which Eliade was a product of the fascist '30s in Europe, he or she should read this novel. Eliade was later to write, in 1978, that "in India I discovered what I later came to refer to as 'cosmic religious feeling.'" That is a curiously vague and generalized phrase for what was really a particular, and dangerous, racial and cultural prejudice. In his romantic experiment in India, Eliade showed a fascination with all shades of such prejudice, and was especially curious about Maitreyi's attitude to color, since it flattered him.

> "In your country it must be very cold. That is why all of you are white...." As she said the word "white" her voice took on an inflection of envy and melancholy and her gaze fell for a few moments on my partly covered arm, which was resting on the table. I was surprised and enchanted to discover this jealousy.

During another conversation, Maitreyi reflects that "I would also like to be white. Is it possible, do you think?" and observes:

> "Chabu is darker than me." "That's not true." "Yes, it is! Mama and I are paler than Chabu and Papa. Have you not noticed?" "Perhaps, but what difference does that make?" "You do not think it important? It will be more difficult for Chabu to marry because she is darker..."

He wonders "Was she stupid, like all young girls, or genuinely simple, a primitive?" and decides, "She seemed a child, a primitive.... For a long time I was able to flatter myself by thinking of our relationship as that of a civilized man and a barbarian." Of course, it was precisely this attitude about civilization and barbarism that imbued their romance with such charm for him. When this attitude was no longer possible, neither was the charm.

When he learns that Chabu "has a tree" and feeds it biscuits, he is enchanted. "Pantheism, pantheism! What rare documents I had before me!" he enthuses and runs to note it in his diary. The condescension of the Orientalist scholar is plain. Mr. Sen invites Alain to move in with his family and give Maitreyi French lessons, and this proves to have its irritations: "She did not benefit from my work; she interrupted continually to ask what the French was for a succession of words and phrases, without any rhyme or reason." During a disquisition on Valéry she interrupts to ask, "Would you like some tea?" He is speechless to discover her setting off with her father one day to give a public lecture on "the essence of beauty," since in his view her aspiration to philosophy is nothing more than a joke. When she had told him "'I am a philosopher ... I like to dream, to think, and to write poetry.' And so that is philosophy, I thought, and smiled." Another time, when attending a recital of "heart-rending, cruel songs that weakened the will and plunged the soul into melancholy," he sees Maitreyi and her family are deeply moved, even to tears, and leaves the room "appalled by this collective passion." He finds her ardor for the aged poet Tagore disgusting, even unnerving.

The truth is that the teenaged and high-spirited Maitreyi loves to tease. Taking him up on the terrace and stretching out beside him, she tells him that his bare foot is "very beautiful. It is white as alabaster," and goes on to inform him that "with us two friends show their affection for each other by rubbing their bare feet together. Look—" and after that the embrace of legs beneath the table "became a daily pleasure." But it is not long before he feels uneasily aware that the family knows of the relationship and encourages it. Her father suggests that they work together in his library at cata-

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loging books, and supplies a car to take them for a drive every evening. This is flattering, but his ardor is checked on being told that Maitreyi's family has instructed her: "You must love him like a brother. Father wants to adopt him. When Father retires we will all go back to Alain's country with him." But the attractions of the young woman who has taken to visiting his room at night and making love to him overcome his reservations, and, curiously, nothing more is ever said about this.

Eventually Chabu, who has observed him fondling her sister's breast, informs her parents. The effect is dramatic. The father sends Alain a letter: "You are a stranger. I do not know you." He departs hurriedly, returning to his Anglo-Indian friends. Here he is brought news that the father has

> struck her in the face and knocked her to the ground, bleeding. He had then had an attack and been taken to hospital. He had gone blind. Maitreyi had been locked in her room. Mrs. Sen had called the chauffeur and ordered him to beat her daughter, in front of her, with a birch rod. He had beaten her till she lost consciousness. Chabu had tried to kill herself by swallowing creosote. She was now in hospital.

The details are bizarre, but the hysteria is plausible enough, and Alain takes fright. Instead of going to his beloved's rescue—"If only I could love her! But I do not love her—I want to love her"—he flees to the mountains and hides in the forests, to lick his wounds. He has proved unequal to the romance, and the exposure has been a humiliation. Eventually his seclusion is broken by another misguided foreigner, also on a quest. Alain feels "great pity for her. She had left her home, her freedom in a civilized country [South Africa!] because she had read the books of an English trickster writing under the pseudonym Ramachandra that revealed the existence of another world, beyond the senses." When his visitor declares that "I want to find the Absolute," he almost "burst out with a roar of laughter.... The word Absolute had revealed a whole world of farce and nonsense, of pseudo-mysticism and high drama—a world which I had inhabited for such a long time."

The romantic hero is overjoyed to find himself set free: "I was saved. I had been delivered from a sentence of death..." This, then, was his final comment on a culture and a civilization that had appealed to him so strongly as to bring him all the way to India, and on which he was to build his intellectual reputation and his scholarly career. In the event, it had been to him "a sentence of death" from which he "was saved." Alas, poor Maitreyi. He returns to Calcutta and ignores her pleas to get in touch with her, saying "I wish she would forget me—that she was not suffering. Our love was over." Eliade left India and never returned, though he continued to work in the field of Indian studies. His learning was phenomenal, and it produced, among many other works, the monumental four-volume *History of Religious Ideas*. He even dedicated a book on yoga to Maitreyi's father; and twenty years later he wrote this novel, scandalously altering his own name but not hers. She was, by then, well-known as a poet in her country.

Why did Eliade write this book? Was it remorse, or an act of revenge? The latter, it would seem, since on the last page of the book he has a visitor from Calcutta tell Alain,

> "I have some bad news for you." "She is not dead?" "It would be better if she were dead! She has committed a shameful act—she has given herself to a fruit-seller." I want to shout, scream, roar with laughter....

and he ends by saying that "my soul is troubled, very troubled.... And yet I want to write everything, everything." Perhaps Eliade realized, when he grew older, that he could not simply run away from what he wrought. The concluding sentence of the novel is an ambiguous one: "I would like to be able to look Maitreyi in the eyes." He felt he could make amends, it seems, by writing down "everything, everything"—in other words, by mythologizing the facts and turning reality into "a cosmic religious feeling."

In 1970 a Romanian visitor to Calcutta met Maitreyi Devi, and told her that "Everyone in my country knows you. You are the heroine of a fairy tale." She was then nearly 60 years old, a grandmother with a stainless reputation as a philanthropist and a writer on whom Tagore himself placed the laurel wreath. Her agitation on learning how her youthful romance had been presented by Eliade was affecting. "Scandalous!" she exclaimed. "I am prepared to accept an unpleasant truth but why should I accept an unpleasant lie?" It was not only anger that she betrayed, but also a more painful emotion: "Into the unrippling smooth pond of my life Sergui had thrown a pebble," and so she cries: "Work, social service, duty to the nation—let them go to hell. I want nothing, nothing—only take me back, take me back to 1930. I want to see him again. Mircea! Mircea!"

Her response to the emotional turbulence was to write a book, only nominally a novel, that recreates, with extraordinary vividness, the 16-year-old in love that she had been. Like Eliade, she changed her own name—her heroine is called Amrita—but did little to conceal his, wittily calling him "Mircea Euclid." One can see in this a small, pathetic act of revenge; but Maitreyi is so entirely, disarmingly open about her own emotions that her book goes far beyond any act of vengeance. It is much more clearly an impassioned plea for truth. In some details Maitreyi echoes Eliade's version quite eerily, but in other essential ways she contradicts him robustly. The contradictions can be read as those of the colonizer and the colonized. Her own home, naturally, was no mysterious, primitive territory to her. She thought it "Westernized": they ate at a dining table with silverware (much to her grandmother's disgust), and there were many other foreign visitors besides Eliade, the scholar Stella Kramrisch and the writer Niccolo Tucci among them, with whom she and her mother were free to meet.

Eliade's fascination with their life was a subject of mirth as well as misunderstanding. When she tells him of her childish love for a chatim tree, "he is taken aback. He calls it 'pantheism.' I did not know what pantheism was.... He could not believe this was no 'ism' but just soaring poetic fancy." But when he reads Whitman to her, she declares that "they [are] not poems, but three pieces of log." He is reluctant to call her mother "Ma," as her young friends do, because in his country it would be an insult to such a youthful woman, which makes her say "his must be an odd country where women felt annoyed at being addressed as 'mother.' " In fact, the misunderstandings are myriad. "There was of course the language difficulty, but more difficult were our mannerisms, our patterns of thought, our allusions and so forth. He mistook one thing for another. The unknown world was like a snare."

Maitreyi's account differs from Eliade's in several important respects. Far from an elaborate family conspiracy to trap the eligible Eliade, the appears to have been the tale of nothing more than the ordinary crush that a 16 year-old girl might develop for an older man, particularly for so romantic a foreigner as a Romanian scholar—and the crush that the family might look upon with indulgence, not taking it seriously at first. Maitreyi makes the French lesson sound innocuous—"Father sat on the sofa between us"—and the game of rubbing feet is told differently: "One Mircea did something outrageous.... was dinner time. He slowly stretched his feet and touched mine while discussing abstruse philosophy with father. Startled I drew my feet back." But she admits readily to the teasing, the tossing of sprigs of jasmine into his room, the deliberate display of passion for the poetry

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Tagore because she enjoyed seeing his ealous reaction. When he kisses her ıand, "the sky came down to the earth—t remained motionless," but she will not ell him she loves him because

> he will become complacent—the bird of jealousy will fly away—I don't want that—I like it more than anything else .... He becomes a little cruel when he is jealous and that is what enchants me. Strange. How can my attitude be described? Is it coquetry? I shall have to look it up in the dictionary.

What frustrates her is his refusal to pay ıer compliments. "Can't you make out vhether I am dark or fair?" she asks. "Are 'ather, me, Sabi, Milu, all the same to 'ou?" Finally he tells her that "you look ike a statue on the facade of a temple," naking her think, "What a let-down! Nothing turns out right for me!"

Her father does arrange for evening lrives in his car, but the whole family 'omes along. There is no wandering in he dark amongst the fireflies, as in Eli-ıde's book; and no nocturnal lovemaking :ither. When he proposes marriage, she 'egrets that he does not go down on his nees as in romances and assures him hat her parents will not agree. He is sur-›rised, because he feels they already ccept him as a son. "Yes, but so what?" he says. "That does not mean they will narry me to you." He offers to convert to Hinduism, but that does not please her at ll: she is a critic of Hindu rituals and the igid rules of Hindu society. "I am a pris-ner. Who will free me? I thought, do not ecome a Hindu, Mircea. Hinduism will ake you nowhere. It will not give you trength, it will take it away." He does not ealize that his European qualities are the ›urce of her attraction to him—his ris-ıg to his feet when a woman enters a ›om, his habit of opening doors for omen, carrying their parcels—and to er parents, too. Perhaps he prefers to ink that he is simply irresistible.

When little Sabi discloses their inti-ıacy and the prospect of a scandal ›oms, the mother warns that "we know othing of his lineage—who knows he ıay have some foul disease...." Then er mother plays her last card: "Do you ant to kill your father? Is that boy earer to you than us?" The fact that laitreyi has bitterly to accept is that in er home, as in any Indian household, ıe father is "the omnipotent king, ıpervising the destiny of their inferi-'s." And so Eliade is thrown out, but not ıite in scenes of hysteria of the sort that smugly paints. The father does not go ind and the little sister does not die. or is Maitreyi beaten unconscious. stead she is made to turn her mind to r studies. Her mother sets about inter-ewing prospective grooms and arranges r marriage to a safely older and more ber husband. They do not meet before their wedding—neither considers it necessary—but he does write her a charming letter that begins "Mademoiselle, Understanding you are going to choose a partner in life I beg to offer myself as a candidate for the vacancy...." Maitreyi is relieved: "I want to escape."

In a way, she does escape. Her husband proves the soul of kindness and consideration. She has more respect in his household than in her own. But he takes her to live in his isolated home in the forests, where she feels exiled and bereft of companionship: "If I read him volumes and volumes of poetry he would listen patiently and say 'Very nice.'" The only society is that of British tea planters, but their drinking of alcohol and hunting of forest creatures put them beyond the pale for Maitreyi. Her loneliness is relieved only briefly when her mentor, the poet Tagore, visits. He helps Maitreyi to reconcile herself to the beauty and the charm of her surroundings, and she displays much skill in portraying a way of life that belonged to the days of empire—and wilderness. One could do with more of her memories and less of her philosophizing on love, time and immortality.

At the conclusion of her book Maitreyi exposes the extent of Eliade's callowness. She shows true novelistic flair in an account of her journey to America to confront Eliade in his lair at the University of Chicago, where he is a famous professor of religion. She has come (with the blessing of her complacent husband) to make her bid for peace of mind. When she walks into his study, he flinches and turns away. She has come with a grievance, and a just one: "Look at the picture of me you have drawn in your book! It is not me." "Fantasy," he lamely mumbles. "Fantasy. I wanted to make you a mysterious being—a goddess—like Kali."

Eliade's explanation, if that is what it was, gave his awful game away. And so the old—the young—Maitreyi retorts spiritedly. "Nonsense," she says. "Don't compare me with Kali. I am not that dark—you always belittle my looks. Here I am standing in your room, a human being made of flesh and blood, not a symbol or a myth. Is this nothing to you?" Clearly it *is* nothing to him. Like many Oriental scholars, and like many Europeans who never overcame the colonialist impulse, Eliade prefers myth to flesh and blood. It was an impulse known to Nietzsche, and later in murderous form to Hitler, to Mussolini, to the Iron Guard, to the tyrants who gave the orders to establish the extermination camps and to those who obeyed them; an impulse that made possible the torturing of flesh and the spilling of blood with cool indifference. So, when Maitreyi confronts Eliade and forces him to turn and face her, she sees his eyes are like "stone." Many years earlier, when she had been told that Eliade had become a fascist, she had burst out: "I could see him standing there, with a butterfly mustache like Hitler's, opening the gas chamber. It suited him well. His is certainly competent in the job. Has he not sent me there repeatedly?" But now there was nothing left for her to do but turn and leave one final time.

Eliade died in 1986. Maitreyi died in 1990. Before her death, she was to experience more trauma. Her father unexpectedly, and ironically, fell in love with a young student, and left his entire estate to her, leaving her mother alone and destitute, making Maitreyi first bitter, then grateful that he had shown himself human and vulnerable at last, even if at such cost. Another blow was to have a French film crew arrive in Calcutta to make a film of Eliade's book. In an effort to spare her further insult, her friends formed a committee to protest the project, but without success. (In the event, the film attracted little attention outside Bengal.)

Now the University of Chicago Press has taken the imaginative step of bringing out both these books simultaneously, providing readers with a fascinating access to two perspectives of a single affair. At one point in her account the anguished Maitreyi invokes Romeo and Juliet, but the romance really does not add up to anything Shakespearean. This is owed not so much to Eliade's dated prose, or to the Bengali flavor of Maitreyi's English, but to the classical requirements of a great, tragic romance: nobility of character, of motive, of action. Those requirements are not fulfilled by a Romeo who confuses his beloved with his own prejudices, who takes to his heels, who refuses to answer his beloved's letters or even to look at her; and by a Juliet who needs to coax a compliment and beg for love.

All we have, alas, is an unlovely affair in which the "hero" farcically needs to mythologize the dark and initially unattractive Maitreyi into a primitive goddess so that he can find her fascinating; and in which the "heroine" looks upon the foreign man's world with all the ignorance of youth and innocence. This allegedly great love was marked, finally, by precisely the failings, the misunderstandings and the self-seeking fantasies that marked the whole colonial encounter.

ANITA DESAI is the author most recently of *Baumgartner's Bombay* (Penguin).

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Scoop Doggy Dogg

IN THE THREE MONTHS I HAVE been married, lots of people have asked my wife and me when we're going to have kids. We think it's a presumptuous question, but we always answer it, and always the same way: Soon. Soon? Yes, soon. We're only 28 years old; there's plenty of time for the grown-up stuff. There are things we still want to do: eat out, come home late, sleep until noon and spend money foolishly when the Tweeds catalog arrives, something we'll have to give up when we're saving our pennies so we can afford cloth diapers. Anyway, as we explain, we already have our hands full: we have Donna Tartt.

DONNA TARTT IS OUR 2-YEAR-OLD dog, a mix of practically every breed except Doberman. (Naturally, she looks just like a Doberman.) In some ways, she may as well be our child. We dote on her endlessly. We have her birth on videotape. And like new parents, we wrestled for a while with her name. Not surprisingly, we kicked around mostly media-centric ideas. At first we thought about Molly Ivins, since we lived in Austin, Texas. But like Molly Ivins herself, the idea was only funny for about five minutes. We also considered Nina Totenberg, but the inevitable tendency would have been to shorten her name to "Totie," which sounded too much like Totie Fields, the schlock comic of the '70s. We eventually settled on Donna Tartt, whose novel, *The Secret History*, we were happily devouring as we were making the decision. The only trouble is, we shorten *that* name, too. On any given day, we're likely to call her Donna Trout, Donna Tartuffo, or Donna Tartikoff. Why? Who knows? Why do parents talk gibberish to their babies?

IT USED TO BE THAT DONNA WAS the world's sweetest dog—and in some respects, she still is. She's enormously docile; if someone menaced us on the street, she'd probably curl up at his feet before barking—if she barked at all. She's a virtual lick machine; she licks us, our friends, the man from UPS and, of course, the body parts of every other dog she can get close to. When we're eating, she doesn't beg for food; she simply stares at us until we shoo her away or toss her some juicy morsel. (She likes chicken and, inexplicably, melon.) At night, when we're channel surfing, she sits quietly on the rug, never complaining when I linger on Mary Matalin's CNBC talk show. And when we get into bed, she wedges herself under the futon frame and snores. Lately, however, Donna has begun to act up. Sneaker laces and fisherman's sandals are mysteriously being chewed. Tissues from the bathroom garbage are appearing in the far corners of the living room. Full loaves of semolina are disappearing from the kitchen counter. I'm afraid, alas, that the issue is age: we're approaching the terrible twos or, if you prefer dog years, the frightening fourteens. The way things are going, I half-expect to come home one day and find Donna reclining on the couch, smoking a cigarette.

THERE'S ANOTHER reason for Donna's misbehavior, and I've figured it out without the help of Elizabeth Thomas (*The Hidden Life of Dogs*) or Stanley Coren (*The Intelligence of Dogs*) or any of the other pop pet-agogues: she hates Washington. Like a teenager pulled out of a school she loves, Donna resents us for yanking her out of her old digs in Austin. Down there, she had the run of a large backyard. She could chase squirrels, nibble on grass, roll in the dirt. Up here, she's cooped up in a tiny apartment. She can run after dust bunnies, but that's about it. In Austin, we walked Donna in sprawling, verdant parks every day. In Washington, she gets to go to Rock Creek Park—a lovely spot—only once or twice a week; the rest of the time, she has to make do in a small, overgrown patch of grass near our building. In Austin, we took Donna into the Hill Country. In Washington, her sole respite is our weekend trips to a gourmet market in the suburbs. There we tie her leash to a tree, and she splays on a pile of wood chips while we stroll through aisles of organic vegetables. Come to think of it, if that were my fate, I'd chew on sandals, too.

ANOTHER DIFFERENCE BETWEEN Austin and Washington, at least for me, has to do with walking Donna. There is no scooping law in Austin, meaning (you'll forgive the expression) the chips fall where they may. Here, you get fined $50 if you don't do your duty. I'm all for keeping the streets pristine, but this is an especially unfortunate law as far as Donna goes. Maybe it's the long days inside, but she has been known to relieve herself two or three times in a single half-hour. The result is that I've become an expert at the art of cleaning up after her: I'm a veritable Scoop Doggy Dogg. The secret, I can tell you, is choosing the right scooping implement. Newspapers are no good; they're messy (all that newsprint on your hands) and unwieldy, too—no good grip. Safeway bags are better, but they're a tad flimsy; when you've got a handful of reprocessed kibble, you need something that won't tear easily. *Washington Post* home delivery bags are sturdier but they're see-through—a disadvantage in the morning, when you've got that queasy, just-out-of-out-bed feeling. No, the best thing to use is *The New York Times* home delivery bag. It's an opaque blue. It's made of unrippable plastic, as I've found many a Sunday when I've tried to get to the magazine in a hurry. And it fits like a glove—literally. I stick my hand deep in the bag, grab the offending matter and then whip it off. No fuss and—most important—no muss. The whole thing takes ten seconds. Memo to Arthur Sulzberger Jr.: there's a sales pitch for the *Times* that you haven't even *dreamed* of.

ON BALANCE, I GUESS WE CAN'T complain too much about life with Donna. We do love her, after all, and the good almost always outweighs the bad: one welcome-home nuzzle at the end of the day is worth ten mangled laces. Still, I wish there were some way for us not to leave her alone so much of the time. When we travel out of town, we invariably have to find someone to house-sit. This isn't really a problem, as there is an endless supply of TNR interns who'll happily walk and feed Donna in exchange for the privilege of staying in our apartment and eating our fat-free bean dips. But it would be a whole lot better if we could just take her with us on the plane. I know, I know we could put her in a box in the cargo hold. But, like the cat who escaped into the fuselage of a Tower Air 747 recently, Donna would probably find a way to wreak havoc. No, I'd want her in the seat next to me. She wouldn't make noise and she's housebroken—and yet dogs aren't allowed in the cabin. Babies, of course, are much worse than dogs—and yet airlines let *them* aboard. Think about every time you're on a plane with a baby: they wail when the air pressure changes, cry during the movie, throw that lousy airline food across the aisle and generally stink up the place. You can't even open the window. Ugh! What makes them do such gross things? *The Hidden Life of Babies*—now *there's* a book I'd read.

EVAN SMITH

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